HARRISON's EDITION.

THE CITIZEN OF THE WORLD.

IN

A SERIES OF LETTERS

FROM A

CHINESE PHILOSOPHER AT LONDON,

TO HIS

FRIENDS IN THE EAST.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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P R E F A C E.

THE ſchoolmen had formerly a very exact way of computing the abilities of their Saints or authors. Eſcobar, for inſtance, was ſaid to have learning as five, genius as four, and gravity as ſeven. Caramuel was greater than he. His learning was as eight, his genius as ſix, and his gravity as thirteen. Were I to eſtimate the merits of our Chineſe Philoſopher by the ſame ſcale, I would not heſitate to ſtate his genius ſtill higher; but as to his learning and gravity, theſe I think might ſafely be marked as nine hundred and ninety nine, within one degree of abſolute frigidity.

Yet upon his firſt appearance here, many were angry not to find him as ignorant as a Tripoline ambaſſador, or an Envoy from Mujac. They were ſurprized to find a man born ſo far from London, that ſchool of prudence and wiſdom, endued even with a moderate capacity. They expreſſed the ſame ſurprize at his knowledge that the Chineſe do at ours. 'How comes it,' ſaid they, 'that the Europeans, ſo remote from China, think with ſo much juſtice and preciſion? They have never read our books, they ſcarcely know even our letters, and yet they talk and reaſon juſt as we do*.' The truth is, the Chineſe and we are pretty much alike. Different degrees of refinement, and not of diſtance, mark the diſtinctions among mankind. Savages of the moſt oppoſite climates, have all but one character of improvidence and rapacity; and tutored nations, however ſeparate, make uſe of the very ſame methods to procure refined enjoyment.

The diſtinctions of polite nations are few; but ſuch as are peculiar to the Chineſe, appear in every page of the following correſpondence. The metaphors and alluſions are all drawn from the Eaſt. Their formality our author carefully preſerves. Many of their favourite tenets in morals are illuſtrated. The Chineſe are always conciſe, ſo is he. Simple, ſo is he. The Chineſe are grave and ſententious, ſo is he. But in one particular, the reſemblance is peculiarly ſtriking: the Chineſe are often dull; and ſo is he. Nor has my aſſiſtance been wanting. We are told in an old romance of a certain knight-errant and his horſe who contracted an intimate friendſhip. The horſe moſt uſually bore the knight; but, in caſes of extraordinary diſpatch, the knight returned the favour, and carried his horſe. Thus in the intimacy between my author and me, he has uſually given me a lift of his Eaſtern ſublimity, and I have ſometimes given him a return of my colloquial eaſe.

Yet it appears ſtrange in this ſeaſon of panegyric, when ſcarce an author paſſes unpraiſed either by his friends or himſelf, that ſuch merit as our Philoſopher's ſhould be forgotten. While the epithets of ingenious, copious, elaborate, and refined, are laviſhed among the mob, like medals at a coronation, the lucky prizes fall on every ſide, but not one on him. I could on this occaſion make myſelf melancholy, by conſidering the capriciouſneſs of public taſte, or the muta-

* Le Comte, Vol. I. p. 210.

bility of fortune; but during this fit of morality, left my reader should sleep, I'll take a nap myself, and when I awake tell him my dream.

I imagined the Thames was frozen over, and I stood by it's side. Several booths were erected upon the ice, and I was told by one of the spectators, that Fashion Fair was going to begin. He added, that every author who would carry his works there, might probably find a very good reception. I was resolved however to observe the humours of the place in safety from the shore, sensible that ice was at best precarious, and having been always a little cowardly in my sleep.

Several of my acquaintance seemed much more hardy than I, and went over the ice with intrepidity. Some carried their works to the fair on sledges, some on carts, and those which were more voluminous, were conveyed in waggons. Their temerity astonished me. I knew their cargoes were heavy, and expected every moment they would have gone to the bottom. They all entered the fair, however, in safety; and each soon after returned to my great surprize, highly satisfied with his entertainment, and the bargains he had brought away.

The success of such numbers at last began to operate upon me. 'If 'these,' cried I, 'meet with favour and safety, some luck may, perhaps, for once attend the unfortunate. I am resolved to make a new 'adventure. The furniture, frippery, and fire-works of China, have 'long been fashionably bought up. I'll try the fair with a small 'cargo of Chinese morality. If the Chinese have contributed to vi'tiate our taste, I'll try how far they can help to improve our under'standing. But as others have driven into the market in waggons, 'I'll cautiously begin by venturing with a wheel-barrow.' Thus resolved, I baled up my goods, and fairly ventured; when, upon just entering the fair, I fancied the ice that had supported an hundred waggons before, cracked under me, and wheel-barrow and all went to the bottom.

Upon awaking from my reverie, with the fright, I cannot help wishing that the pains taken in giving this correspondence an English dress, had been employed in contriving new political systems, or new plots for farces. I might then have taken my station in the world, either as a poet or a philosopher, and made one in those little societies where men club to raise each others reputation. But at present I belong to no particular class. I resemble one of those solitary animals, that has been forced from it's forest to gratify human curiosity. My earliest wish was to escape unheeded through life; but I have been set up for halfpence, to fret and scamper at the end of my chain. Though none are injured by my rage, I am naturally too savage to court any friends by fawning; too obstinate to be taught new tricks; and too improvident to mind what may happen: I am appeased, though not contented. Too indolent for intrigue, and too timid to push for favour, I am—But what signifies what I am.

Ελπὶς καὶ σὺ τὺχη, μέγα χαίρετε· τὸν λιμέν' ἔυρον.
Οὐδὲν ἐμοί χ' ὑμῖν· παίζετε τὺς μετ' ἐμέ.

THE

THE

CITIZEN OF THE WORLD.

LETTER I.

TO MR. ****, MERCHANT IN LONDON.

SIR, AMSTERDAM.

YOURS of the 13th inſtant, covering two bills, one on Meſſrs. R. and D. value 478l. 10s. and the other on Mr. ****, value 285l. duly came to hand; the former of which met with honour, but the other has been trifled with, and I am afraid will be returned proteſted.

The bearer of this is my friend, therefore let him be yours. He is a native of Honan in China, and one who did me ſignal ſervices when he was a mandarine, and I a factor at Canton. By frequently converſing with the Engliſh there, he has learned the language, though he is intirely a ſtranger to their manners and cuſtoms. I am told he is a philoſopher, I am ſure he is an honeſt man; that to you will be his beſt recommendation, next to the conſideration of his being the friend of, Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER II.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, IN LONDON, TO ****, MERCHANT IN AMSTERDAM.

FRIEND OF MY HEART,

'MAY the wings of peace reſt 'upon thy dwelling, and the 'ſhield of conſcience preſerve thee from 'vice and miſery:' for all thy favours accept my gratitude and eſteem, the only tributes a poor philoſophic wanderer can return; ſure fortune is reſolved to make me unhappy, when ſhe gives others a power of teſtifying their friendſhip by actions, and leaves me only words to expreſs the ſincerity of mine.

I am perfectly ſenſible of the delicacy with which you endeavour to leſſen your own merit and my obligations. By calling your late inſtances of friendſhip only a return for former favours, you would induce me to impute to your juſtice what I owe to your generoſity.

The ſervices I did you at Canton, juſtice, humanity, and my office, bade me perform; thoſe you have done me ſince my arrival at Amſterdam, no laws obliged you to, no juſtice required, even half your favours would have been greater than my moſt ſanguine expectations.

The ſum of money therefore which you privately conveyed into my bag-

gage, when I was leaving Holland, and which I was ignorant of till my arrival in London, I muſt beg leave to return. You have been bred a merchant, and I a ſcholar; You conſequently love money better than I. You can find pleaſure in ſuperfluity, I am perfectly content with what is ſufficient; take therefore what is yours, it may give you ſome pleaſure, even though you have no occaſion to uſe it; my happineſs it cannot improve, for I have already all that I want.

My paſſage by ſea from Rotterdam to England, was more painful to me than all the journies I ever made on land. I have traverſed the immeaſurable wilds of Mogul Tartary; felt all the rigours of Siberian ſkies; I have had my repoſe an hundred times diſturbed by invading ſavages, and have ſeen without ſhrinking the deſart ſands riſe like a troubled ocean all around me; againſt theſe calamities I was armed with reſolution; but in my paſſage to England, though nothing occurred that gave the mariners any uneaſineſs, to one who was never at ſea before, all was a ſubject of aſtoniſhment and terror. To find the land diſappear, to ſee our ſhip mount the waves ſwift as an arrow from the Tartar bow, to hear the wind howling through the cordage, to feel a ſickneſs which depreſſes even the ſpirits of the brave; theſe were unexpected diſtreſſes, and conſequently aſſaulted me unprepared to receive them.

You men of Europe think nothing of a voyage by ſea. With us of China, a man who has been from ſight of land is regarded upon his return with admiration. I have known ſome provinces where there is not even a name for the ocean. What a ſtrange people therefore am I got amongſt, who have founded an empire on this unſtable element, who build cities upon billows that riſe higher than the mountains of Tipartala, and make the deep more formidable than the wildeſt tempeſt.

Such accounts as theſe, I muſt confeſs, were my firſt motives for ſeeing England. Theſe induced me to undertake a journey of ſeven hundred painful days, in order to examine it's opulence, buildings, ſciences, arts and manufactures, on the ſpot. Judge then my diſappointment, on entering London, to ſee no ſigns of that opulence ſo much talked of abroad; wherever I turn, I am preſented with a gloomy ſolemnity in the houſes, the ſtreets and the inhabitants; none of that beautiful gilding which makes a principal ornament in Chineſe architecture. The ſtreets of Nankin are ſometimes ſtrewed with gold leaf; very different are thoſe of London: in the midſt of their pavements, a great lazy puddle moves muddily along; heavy laden machines with wheels of unweildy thickneſs crowd up every paſſage; ſo that a ſtranger, inſtead of finding time for obſervation, is often happy if he has time to eſcape from being cruſhed to pieces.

The houſes borrow very few ornaments from architecture; their chief decoration ſeems to be a paltry piece of painting, hung out at their doors or windows, at once a proof of their indigence and vanity. Their vanity, in each having one of thoſe pictures expoſed to public view; and their indigence, in being unable to get them better painted! In this reſpect, the fancy of their painters is alſo deplorable. Could you believe it? I have ſeen five black lions and three blue boars in leſs than the circuit of half a mile; and yet you know that animals of theſe colours are no where to be found except in the wild imaginations of Europe.

From theſe circumſtances in their buildings, and from the diſmal looks of the inhabitants, I am induced to conclude that the nation is actually poor; and that, like the Perſians, they make a ſplendid figure every where but at home. The proverb of Xixofou is, That a man's riches may be ſeen in his eyes; if we judge of the Engliſh by this rule, there is not a poorer nation under the ſun.

I have been here but two days, ſo will not be haſty in my deciſions; ſuch letters as I ſhall write to Fipſihi in Moſcow, I beg you will endeavour to forward with all diligence; I ſhall ſend them open, in order that you may take copies or tranſlations, as you are equally verſed in the Dutch and Chineſe languages. Dear friend, think of my abſence with regret, as I ſincerely regret yours; even while I write, I lament our ſeparation. Farewell.

LETTER III.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO THE CARE OF FIPSIHI, RESIDENT IN MOSCOW; TO BE FORWARDED BY THE RUSSIAN CARAVAN TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN IN CHINA.

THINK not, O thou guide of my youth, that abſence can impair my reſpect, or interpoſing trackleſs deſarts blot your reverend figure from my memory. The farther I travel, I feel the pain of ſeparation with ſtronger force; thoſe ties that bind me to my native country, and you, are ſtill unbroken. By every remove, I only drag a greater length of chain.

Could I find ought worth tranſmitting from ſo remote a region as this to which I have wandered, I ſhould gladly ſend it; but inſtead of this, you muſt be contented with a renewal of my former profeſſions, and an imperfect account of a people with whom I am as yet but ſuperficially acquainted. The remarks of a man who has been but three days in the country can only be thoſe obvious circumſtances which force themſelves upon the imagination: I conſider myſelf here as a newly-created being introduced into a new world; every object ſtrikes with wonder and ſurpriſe. The imagination ſtill unſated, ſeems the only active principle of the mind. The moſt trifling occurrences give pleaſure, till the gloſs of novelty is worn away. When I have ceaſed to wonder, I may poſſibly grow wiſe; I may then call the reaſoning principle to my aid, and compare thoſe objects with each other, which were before examined without reflection.

Behold me then in London, gazing at the ſtrangers, and they at me; it ſeems they find ſomewhat abſurd in my figure; and had I been never from home, it is poſſible I might find an infinite fund of ridicule in theirs; but by long travelling I am taught to laugh at folly alone, and to find nothing truly ridiculous but villainy and vice.

When I had juſt quitted my native country, and croſſed the Chineſe wall, I fancied every deviation from the cuſtoms and manners of China was a departing from nature: I ſmiled at the blue lips and red foreheads of the Tongueſe; and could hardly contain when I ſaw the Daures dreſs their heads with horns. The Oſtiacs powdered with red earth; and the Calmuck beauties tricked out in all the finery of ſheep-ſkin appeared highly ridiculous; but I ſoon perceived that the ridicule lay not in them but in me; that I falſely condemned others of abſurdity, becauſe they happened to differ from a ſtandard originally founded in prejudice or partiality.

I find no pleaſure, therefore, in taxing the Engliſh with departing from nature in their external appearance, which is all I yet know of their character; it is poſſible they only endeavour to improve her ſimple plan, ſince every extravagance in dreſs proceeds from a deſire of becoming more beautiful than nature made us; and this is ſo harmleſs a vanity, that I not only pardon but approve it: a deſire to be more excellent than others, is what actually makes us ſo; and as thouſands find a livelihood in ſociety by ſuch appetites, none but the ignorant inveigh againſt them.

You are not inſenſible, moſt reverend Fum Hoam, what numberleſs trades, even among the Chineſe, ſubſiſt by the harmleſs pride of each other. Your noſe-borers, feet-ſwathers, tooth-ſtainers, eye-brow pluckers, would all want bread, ſhould their neighbours want vanity. Theſe vanities, however, employ much fewer hands in China than in England; and a fine gentleman, or a fine lady, here dreſſed up to the faſhion, ſeems ſcarcely to have a ſingle limb that does not ſuffer ſome diſtortions from art.

To make a fine gentleman, ſeveral trades are required, but chiefly a barber: you have undoubtedly heard of the Jewiſh champion, whoſe ſtrength lay in his hair: one would think that the Engliſh were for placing all wiſdom there: to appear wiſe, nothing more is requiſite here than for a man to borrow hair from the

the heads of his neighbours, and clap it like a buſh on his own: the diſtributors of law and phyſic ſtick on ſuch quantities, that it is almoſt impoſſible, even in idea, to diſtinguiſh between the head and the hair.

Thoſe whom I have been now deſcribing, affect the gravity of the lion: thoſe I am going to deſcribe, more reſemble the pert vivacity of ſmaller animals. The barber, who is ſtill maſter of the ceremonies, cuts their hair cloſe to the crown; and then with a compoſition of meal and hog's lard, plaiſters the whole in ſuch a manner, as to make it impoſſible to diſtinguiſh whether the patient wears a cap or a plaiſter; but to make the picture more perfectly ſtriking, conceive the tail of ſome beaſt, a greyhound's tail, or a pig's tail, for inſtance, appended to the back of the head, and reaching down to that place where tails in other animals are generally ſeen to begin; thus betailed and bepowdered, the man of taſte fancies he improves in beauty, dreſſes up his hard-featured face in ſmiles, and attempts to look hideouſly tender. Thus equipped, he is qualified to make love, and hopes for ſucceſs more from the powder on the outſide of his head, than the ſentiments within.

Yet, when I conſider what ſort of a creature the fine lady is, to whom he is ſuppoſed to pay his addreſſes, it is not ſtrange to find him thus equipped in order to pleaſe. She is herſelf every whit as fond of powder, and tails, and hog's lard, as he: to ſpeak my ſecret ſentiments, moſt reverend Fum, the ladies here are horridly ugly; I can hardly endure the ſight of them; they no way reſemble the beauties of China: the Europeans have a quite different idea of beauty from us; when I reflect on the ſmall-footed perfections of an Eaſtern beauty, how is it poſſible I ſhould have eyes for a woman whoſe feet are ten inches long. I ſhall never forget the beauties of my native city of Nanfew. How very broad their faces; how very ſhort their noſes; how very little their eyes; how very thin their lips; how very black their teeth; the ſnow on the tops of Bao is not fairer than their cheeks; and their eye-brows are ſmall as the line by the pencil of Quamſi. Here a lady with ſuch perfections would be frightful; Dutch and Chineſe beauties, indeed, have ſome reſemblance, but Engliſh women are entirely different; red cheeks, big eyes, and teeth of a moſt odious whiteneſs, are not only ſeen here, but wiſhed for; and then they have ſuch maſculine feet, as actually ſerve *ſome* for walking!

Yet, uncivil as Nature has been, they ſeem reſolved to outdo her in unkindneſs; they uſe white powder, blue powder, and black powder, for their hair; and a red powder for the face on ſome particular occaſions.

They like to have the face of various colours, as among the Tartars of Koreki, frequently ſticking on, with ſpittle, little black patches on every part of it, except on the tip of the noſe, which I have never ſeen with a patch. You will have a better idea of their manner of placing theſe ſpots, when I have finiſhed a map of an Engliſh face patched up to the faſhion, which ſhall ſhortly be ſent to encreaſe your curious collection of paintings, medals, and monſters.

But what ſurprizes me more than all the reſt, is, what I have juſt now been credibly informed by one of this country: 'Moſt ladies here,' ſays he, 'have 'two faces; one face to ſleep in, and 'another to ſhew in company: the firſt 'is generally reſerved for the huſband 'and family at home, the other put on 'to pleaſe ſtrangers abroad; the family 'face is often indifferent enough, but 'the out-door one looks ſomething better; this is always made at the toilet, 'where the looking-glaſs and toad-eater 'ſit in council, and ſettle the complexion 'of the day.'

I cannot aſcertain the truth of this remark; however, it is actually certain, that they wear more cloaths within doors than without; and I have ſeen a lady who ſeemed to ſhudder at a breeze in her own apartment, appear half naked in the ſtreets. Farewell.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

TO THE SAME.

THE Englifh feem as filent as the Japonefe, yet vainer than the inhabitants of Siam. Upon my arrival I attributed that referve to modefty, which I now find has it's origin in pride. Condefcend to addrefs them firft, and you are fure of their acquaintance; ftoop to flattery, and you conciliate their friendfhip and efteem. They bear hunger, cold, fatigue, and all the miferies of life, without fhrinking; danger only calls forth their fortitude; they even exult in calamity; but contempt is what they cannot bear. An Englifhman fears contempt more than death; he often flies to death as a refuge from it's preffure; and dies when he fancies the world has ceafed to efteem him.

Pride feems the fource not only of their national vices, but of their national virtues alfo. An Englifhman is taught to love his king as his friend, but to acknowledge no other mafter than the laws which himfelf has contributed to enact. He defpifes thofe nations, who, that one may be free, are all content to be flaves; who firft lift a tyrant into terror, and then fhrink under his power as if delegated from Heaven. Liberty is echoed in all their affemblies, and thoufands might be found ready to offer up their lives for the found, though perhaps not one of all the number underftands it's meaning. The loweft mechanic, however, looks upon it as his duty to be a watchful guardian of his country's freedom, and often ufes a language that might feem haughty, even in the mouth of the great emperor who traces his anceftry to the moon.

A few days ago, paffing by one of their prifons, I could not avoid ftopping, in order to liften to a dialogue which I thought might afford me fome entertainment. The converfation was carried on between a debtor through the grate of his prifon, a porter who had ftopped to reft his burthen, and a foldier at the window. The fubject was upon a threatened invafion from France, and each feemed extremely anxious to refcue his country from the impending danger. 'For my part,' cries the prifoner, 'the greateft of my apprehenfions is for our freedom; if the French fhould conquer, what would become of Englifh liberty? My dear friends, liberty is the Englifhman's prerogative; we muft preferve that at the expence of our lives, of that the French fhall never deprive us; it is not to be expected that men who are flaves themfelves would preferve our freedom fhould they happen to conquer.'—'Ay, flaves,' cries the porter, 'they are all flaves, fit only to carry burthens every one of them. Before I would ftoop to flavery, may this be my poifon,' and he held the goblet in his hand, 'may this be my poifon—but I would fooner lift for a foldier.'

The foldier, taking the goblet from his friend, with much awe fervently cried out—'It is not fo much our liberties as our religion that would fuffer by fuch a change: Ay, our religion, my lads. May the Devil fink me into flames,' fuch was the folemnity of his adjuration, 'if the French fhould come over, but our religion would be utterly undone.' So faying, inftead of a libation, he applied the goblet to his lips, and confirmed his fentiments with a ceremony of the moft perfevering devotion.

In fhort, every man here pretends to be a politician; even the fair-fex are fometimes found to mix the feverity of national altercation with the blandifhments of love, and often become conquerors by more weapons of deftruction than their eyes.

This univerfal paffion for politics is gratified by Daily Gazettes, as with us at China. But as in ours the emperor endeavours to inftruct his people, in theirs the people endeavour to inftruct the adminiftration. You muft not, however, imagine, that they who compile thefe papers have any actual knowledge of the politics, or the government of a ftate; they only collect their materials from the oracle of fome coffeehoufe, which oracle has himfelf gathered them the night before from a beau at a gaming-table, who has pillaged his knowledge from a great man's porter, who has had his information from the

great man's gentleman, who has invented the whole ſtory for his own amuſement the night preceding.

The Engliſh in general ſeem fonder of gaining the eſteem than the love of thoſe they converſe with: this gives a formality to their amuſements; their gayeſt converſations have ſomething too wiſe for innocent relaxation; though in company you are ſeldom diſguſted with the abſurdity of a fool, you are ſeldom lifted into rapture by thoſe ſtrokes of vivacity which give inſtant, though not permanent pleaſure.

What they want, however, in gaiety, they make up in politeneſs. You ſmile at hearing me praiſe the Engliſh for their politeneſs: you who have heard very different accounts from the miſſionaries at Pekin, who have ſeen ſuch a different behaviour in their merchants and ſeamen at home. But I muſt ſtill repeat it, the Engliſh ſeem more polite than any of their neighbours; their great art in this reſpect lies in endeavouring, while they oblige, to leſſen the force of the favour. Other countries are fond of obliging a ſtranger; but ſeem deſirous that he ſhould be ſenſible of the obligation. The Engliſh confer their kindneſs with an appearance of indifference, and give away benefits with an air as if they deſpiſed them.

Walking a few days ago between an Engliſhman and a Frenchman into the ſuburbs of the city, we were overtaken by a heavy ſhower of rain. I was unprepared; but they had each large coats, which defended them from what ſeemed to me a perfect inundation. The Engliſhman ſeeing me ſhrink from the weather, accoſted me thus: 'Pſha, man, 'what doſt ſhrink at? Here, take this 'coat; I don't want it; I find it no 'way uſeful to me; I had as lief be 'without it.' The Frenchman began to ſhew his politeneſs in turn: 'My 'dear friend,' cries he, 'why won't 'you oblige me by making uſe of my 'coat; you ſee how well it defends me 'from the rain; I ſhould not chuſe to 'part with it to others, but to ſuch a 'friend as you, I could even part with 'my ſkin to do him ſervice.'

From ſuch minute inſtances as theſe, moſt reverend Fum Hoam, I am ſenſible your ſagacity will collect inſtruction. The volume of nature is the book of knowledge; and he becomes moſt wiſe who makes the moſt judicious ſelection. Farewell.

LETTER V.

TO THE SAME.

I Have already informed you of the ſingular paſſion of this nation for politics. An Engliſhman, not ſatisfied with finding by his own proſperity the contending powers of Europe properly balanced, deſires alſo to know the preciſe value of every weight in either ſcale. To gratify this curioſity, a leaf of political inſtruction is ſerved up every morning with tea: when our politician has feaſted upon this, he repairs to a coffee-houſe, in order to ruminate upon what he has read, and encreaſe his collection; from thence he proceeds to the ordinary, enquires what news, and treaſuring up every acquiſition there, hunts about all the evening in queſt of more, and carefully adds it to the reſt. Thus at night he retires home, full of the important advices of the day. When lo! awaking next morning, he finds the inſtructions of yeſterday a collection of abſurdity or palpable falſhood. This, one would think, a mortifying repulſe in the purſuit of wiſdom; yet our politician, no way diſcouraged, hunts on, in order to collect freſh materials, and in order to be again diſappointed.

I have often admired the commercial ſpirit which prevails over Europe; have been ſurpriſed to ſee them carry on a traffic with productions, that an Aſiatic ſtranger would deem entirely uſeleſs. It is a proverb in China, That an European ſuffers not even his ſpittle to be loſt; the maxim, however, is not ſufficiently ſtrong, ſince they ſell even their Lies to great advantage. Every nation drives a conſiderable trade in this commodity with their neighbours.

An Engliſh dealer in this way, for inſtance, has only to aſcend to his work-houſe, and manufacture a turbulent ſpeech averred to be ſpoken in the ſe-

nate;

nate; or a report ſuppoſed to be dropt at court; a piece of ſcandal that ſtrikes at a popular mandarine; or a ſecret treaty between two neighbouring powers. When finiſhed, theſe goods are baled up, and conſigned to a factor abroad, who ſends in return two battles, three ſieges, and a ſhrewd letter filled with daſhes ——— blanks and ſtars **** of great importance.

Thus you perceive, that a ſingle gazette is the joint manufacture of Europe; and he who would peruſe it with a philoſophical eye, might perceive in every paragraph ſomething characteriſtic of the nation to which it belongs. A map does not exhibit a more diſtinct view of the boundaries and ſituation of every country, than it's news does a picture of the genius, and the morals of it's inhabitants. The ſuperſtition and erroneous delicacy of Italy, the formality of Spain, the cruelty of Portugal, the fears of Auſtria, the confidence of Pruſſia, the levity of France, the avarice of Holland, the pride of England, the abſurdity of Ireland, and the national partiality of Scotland, are all conſpicuous in every page.

But, perhaps, you may find more ſatisfaction in a real news-paper, than in my deſcription of one; I therefore ſend a ſpecimen, which may ſerve to exhibit the manner of their being written, and diſtinguiſh the characters of the various nations which are united in it's compoſition.

Naples. We have lately dug up here a curious Etruſcan monument, broke in two in the raiſing. The characters are ſcarce viſible; but Nugoſi, the learned antiquary, ſuppoſes it to have been erected in honour of Picus, a Latin King, as one of the lines may be plainly diſtinguiſhed to begin with a P. It is hoped this diſcovery will produce ſomething valuable, as the literati of our twelve academies are deeply engaged in the diſquiſition.

Pisa. Since Father Fudgi, prior of St. Gilbert's, has gone to reſide at Rome, no miracles have been performed at the ſhrine of St. Gilbert; the devout begin to grow uneaſy, and ſome begin actually to fear that St. Gilbert has forſaken them with the reverend father.

Lucca. The adminiſtrators of our ſerene republic, have frequent conferences upon the part they ſhall take in the preſent commotions of Europe. Some are for ſending a body of their troops, conſiſting of one company of foot, and ſix horſemen, to make a diverſion in favour of the Empreſs Queen; others are as ſtrenuous aſſerters of the Pruſſian intereſt; what turn theſe debates may take, time only can diſcover. However, certain it is, we ſhall be able to bring into the field at the opening of the next campaign, ſeventy-five armed men, a commander in chief, and two drummers of great experience.

Spain. Yeſterday the new king ſhewed himſelf to his ſubjects, and after having ſtaid half an hour in his balcony, retired to the royal apartment. The night concluded on this extraordinary occaſion with illuminations, and other demonſtrations of joy.

The queen is more beautiful than the riſing ſun, and reckoned one of the firſt wits in Europe: ſhe had a glorious opportunity of diſplaying the readineſs of her invention, and her ſkill in repartee, lately at court. The Duke of Lerma, coming up to her with a low bow and a ſmile, and preſenting a noſegay ſet with diamonds—'Madam,' cries he, 'I am your moſt obedient humble ſervant.' —'Oh, Sir,' replies the queen, without any prompter, or the leaſt heſitation, 'I'm very proud of the very great honour you do me.' Upon which ſhe made a low curtſey, and all the courtiers fell a laughing at the readineſs and the ſmartneſs of her reply.

Lisbon. Yeſterday we had an *auto da fe*, at which were burned three young women accuſed of hereſy, one of them of exquiſite beauty; two Jews, and an old woman convicted of being a witch: one of the friars, who attended this laſt, reports, that he ſaw the devil fly out of her at the ſtake in the ſhape of a flame of fire. The populace behaved on this occaſion with great good-humour, joy, and ſincere devotion.

Our *merciful Sovereign* has been for ſome time paſt recovered of his fright: though ſo atrocious an attempt deſerved to exterminate half the nation, yet he has been graciouſly pleaſed to ſpare the lives of his ſubjects, and not above five hundred have been broke upon the wheel, or otherwiſe executed, upon this horrid occaſion.

Vienna. We have received certain advices that a party of twenty thouſand

Auſtrians, having attacked a much ſuperior body of Pruſſians, put them all to flight, and took the reſt priſoners of war.

BERLIN. We have received certain advices that a party of twenty thouſand Pruſſians, having attacked a much ſuperior body of Auſtrians, put them to flight, and took a great number of priſoners, with their military cheſt, cannon, and baggage.

Though we have not ſucceeded this campaign to our wiſhes; yet, when we think of him who commands us, we reſt in ſecurity: while we ſleep, our king is watchful for our ſafety.

PARIS. We ſhall ſoon ſtrike a ſignal blow. We have ſeventeen flat-bottomed boats at Havre. The people are in excellent ſpirits, and our miniſters make no difficulty in raiſing the ſupplies.

We are all undone; the people are diſcontented to the laſt degree; the miniſters are obliged to have recourſe to the moſt rigorous methods to raiſe the expences of the war.

Our diſtreſſes are great; but Madam Pompadour continues to ſupply our king, who is now growing old, with a freſh lady every night. His health, thank Heaven, is ſtill pretty well; nor is he in the leaſt unfit, as was reported, for any kind of royal exercitation. He was ſo frighted at the affair of Damien, that his phyſicians were apprehenſive leſt his reaſon ſhould ſuffer, but that wretch's tortures ſoon compoſed the kingly terrors of his breaſt.

ENGLAND. Wanted an uſher to an academy. N. B. He muſt be able to read, dreſs hair, and muſt have had the ſmall-pox.

DUBLIN. We hear that there is a benevolent ſubſcription on foot among the nobility and gentry of this kingdom, who are great patrons of merit, in order to aſſiſt Black and All Black, in his conteſt with the Padder n mare.

We hear from Germany that Prince Ferdinand has gained a compleat victory, and taken twelve kettle drums, five ſtandards, and four waggons of ammunition priſoners of war.

EDINBURGH. We are poſitive when we ſay that Saunders M'Gregor, who was lately executed for horſe-ſtealing, is not a Scotchman, but born in Carrickfergus. Farewell.

LETTER VI.

FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, TO LIEN CHI ALTANGI, THE DISCONTENTED WANDERER; BY THE WAY OF MOSCOW.

WHETHER ſporting on the flowery banks of the river Irtis, or ſcaling the ſteepy mountains of Douchenour: whether traverſing the black deſarts of Kobi, or giving leſſons of politeneſs to the ſavage inhabitants of Europe. In whatever country, whatever climate, and whatever circumſtances, all hail! May Tien, the univerſal ſoul, take you under his protection, and inſpire you with a ſuperior portion of himſelf.

How long, my friend, ſhall an enthuſiaſm for knowledge continue to obſtruct your happineſs, and tear you from all the connections that make life pleaſing? How long will you continue to rove from climate to climate, circled by thouſands, and yet without a friend, feeling all the inconveniencies of a crowd, and all the anxiety of being alone.

I know you reply, that the refined pleaſure of growing every day wiſer, is a ſufficient recompence for every inconvenience. I know you will talk of the vulgar ſatisfaction of ſoliciting happineſs from ſenſual enjoyment only; and probably enlarge upon the exquiſite raptures of ſentimental bliſs. Yet, believe me, friend, you are deceixed; all our pleaſures, though ſeemingly never ſo remote from ſenſe, derive their origin from ſome one of the ſenſes. The moſt exquiſite demonſtration in mathematics, or the moſt pleaſing diſquiſition in metaphyſics, if it does not ultimately tend to increaſe ſome ſenſual ſatisfaction, is delightful only to fools, or to men who have by long habit contracted a falſe idea of

pleaſure;

pleaſure; and he who ſeparates ſenſual and ſentimental enjoyments, ſeeking happineſs from mind alone, is in fact as wretched as the naked inhabitant of the foreſt, who places all happineſs in the firſt, regardleſs of the latter. There are two extremes in this reſpect; the ſavage who ſwallows down the draught of pleaſure without ſtaying to reflect on his happineſs, and the ſage who paſſeth the cup while he reflects on the conveniencies of drinking.

It is with an heart full of ſorrow, my dear Altangi, that I muſt inform you that what the world calls happineſs muſt now be yours no longer. Our great emperor's diſpleaſure at your leaving China, contrary to the rules of our government, and the immemorial cuſtom of the empire, has produced the moſt terrible effects. Your wife, daughter, and the reſt of your family, have been ſeized by his order, and appropriated to his uſe; all except your ſon are now the peculiar property of him who poſſeſſes all; him I have hidden from the officers employed for this purpoſe; and even at the hazard of my life I have concealed him. The youth ſeems obſtinately bent on finding you out, wherever you are; he is determined to face every danger that oppoſes his purſuit. Though yet but fifteen, all his father's virtues and obſtinacy ſparkle in his eyes, and mark him as one deſtined to no mediocrity of fortune.

You ſee, my deareſt friend, what imprudence has brought thee to; from opulence, a tender family, ſurrounding friends, and your maſter's eſteem, it has reduced thee to want, perſecution; and ſtill worſe, to our mighty monarch's diſpleaſure. Want of prudence is too frequently the want of virtue; nor is there on earth a more powerful advocate for vice than poverty. As I ſhall endeavour to guard thee from the one, ſo guard thyſelf from the other; and ſtill think of me with affection and eſteem. Farewell.

LETTER VII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

The Editor thinks proper to acquaint the reader that the greateſt part of the following letter ſeems to him to be little more than a rhapſody of ſentences borrowed from Confucius, the Chineſe philoſopher.

A Wife, a daughter carried into captivity to expiate my offence, a ſon ſcarce yet arrived at maturity, reſolving to encounter every danger in the pious purſuit of one who has undone him, theſe indeed are circumſtances of diſtreſs; though my tears were more precious than the gem of Golconda, yet would they fall upon ſuch an occaſion.

But I ſubmit to the ſtroke of Heaven, I hold the volume of Confucius in my hand, and as I read grow humble, and patient, and wiſe. 'We ſhould feel ſorrow,' ſays he, 'but not ſink under it's oppreſſion: the heart of a wiſe man ſhould reſemble a mirrour, which reflects every object without being ſullied by any. The wheel of fortune turns inceſſantly round, and who can ſay within himſelf, I ſhall to day be uppermoſt. We ſhould hold the immutable mean that lies between in ſenſibility and anguiſh; our attempts ſhould be not to extinguiſh nature, but to repreſs it; not to ſtand unmoved at diſtreſs, but endeavour to turn every diſaſter to our own advantage. Our greateſt glory is, not in never falling, but in riſing every time we fall.'

I fancy myſelf at preſent, O thou reverend diſciple of Tao, more than a match for all that can happen: the chief buſineſs of my life has been to procure wiſdom, and the chief object of that wiſdom was to be happy. My attendance on your lectures, my conferences with the miſſionaries of Europe, and all my ſubſequent adventures upon quitting China, were calculated to encreaſe the ſphere of my happineſs, not my curioſity. Let European travellers croſs ſeas and deſarts merely to meaſure the height of a mountain, to deſcribe the cataract of a river, or tell the commodities which every country may produce; merchants or geographers, perhaps, may find profit by ſuch diſcoveries, but what advantage can accrue to a philoſopher from ſuch accounts,

accounts, who is desirous of understanding the human heart, who seeks to know the *men* of every country, who desires to discover those differences which result from climate, religion, education, prejudice, and partiality.

I should think my time very ill bestowed, were the only fruits of my adventures to consist in being able to tell, that a tradesman of London lives in an house three times as high as that of our great Emperor. That the ladies wear longer cloaths than the men, that the priests are dressed in colours which we are taught to detest, and that their soldiers wear scarlet, which is with us the symbol of peace and innocence. How many travellers are there, who confine their relations to such minute and useless particulars: for one who enters into the genius of those nations with whom he has conversed, who discloses their morals, their opinions, the ideas which they entertain of religious worship, the intrigues of their ministers, and their skill in sciences; there are twenty, who only mention some idle particulars, which can be of no real use to a true philosopher. All their remarks tend, neither to make themselves nor others more happy; they no way contribute to controul their passions, to bear adversity, to inspire true virtue, or raise a detestation of vice.

Men may be very learned, and yet very miserable; it is easy to be a deep geometrician, or a sublime astronomer, but very difficult to be a good man; I esteem, therefore, the traveller who instructs the heart, but despise him who only indulges the imagination: a man who leaves home to mend himself and others is a philosopher; but he who goes from country to country, guided by the blind impulse of curiosity, is only a vagabond. From Zerdusht down to him of Tyanea, I honour all those great names who endeavoured to unite the world by their travels; such men grew wiser as well as better, the farther they departed from home; and seemed like rivers, whose streams are not only increased, but refined, as they travel from their source.

For my own part, my greatest glory is, that travelling has not more steeled my constitution against all the vicissitudes of climate, and all the depressions of fatigue, than it has my mind against the accidents of fortune, or the accesses of despair. Farewell.

LETTER VIII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

HOW insupportable! O thou possessor of heavenly wisdom, would be this seperation, this immeasureable distance from my friend, were I not able thus to delineate my heart upon paper, and to send thee daily a map of my mind.

I am every day better reconciled to the people among whom I reside, and begin to fancy that in time I shall find them more opulent, more charitable, and more hospitable than I at first imagined. I begin to learn somewhat of their manners and customs, and to see reasons for several deviations which they make from us, from whom all other nations derive their politeness as well as their original.

In spite of taste, in spite of prejudice, I now begin to think their women tolerable; I can now look on a languishing blue eye without disgust, and pardon a set of teeth, even though whiter than ivory. I now begin to fancy there is no universal standard for beauty. The truth is, the manners of the ladies in this city are so very open, and so vastly engaging, that I am inclined to pass over the more glaring defects of their persons, since compensated by the more solid, yet latent beauties of the mind: what though they want black teeth, or are deprived of the allurements of feet no bigger than their thumbs, yet still they have souls, my friend, such souls, so free, so pressing, so hospitable, and so engaging ——I have received more invitations in the streets of London from the sex in one night, than I have met with at Pekin in twelve revolutions of the moon.

Every evening as I return home from my usual solitary excursions, I am met by several of those well disposed daughters of hospitality, at different times and in different streets, richly dressed, and with minds not less noble than their appearance. You know that nature has indulged

indulged me with a perſon by no means agreeable; yet are they too generous to object to my homely appearance; they feel no repugnance at my broad face and flat noſe; they perceive me to be a ſtranger, and that alone is a ſufficient recommendation. They even ſeem to think it their duty to do the honours of the country by every act of complaiſance in their power. One takes me under the arm, and in a manner forces me along; another catches me round the neck, and deſires to partake in this office of hoſpitality; while a third kinder ſtill, invites me to refreſh my ſpirits with wine. Wine is in England reſerved only for the rich, yet here even wine is given away to the ſtranger!

A few nights ago, one of theſe generous creatures, dreſſed all in white, and flaunting like a meteor by my ſide, forcibly attended me home to my own apartment. She ſeemed charmed with the elegance of the furniture, and the convenience of my ſituation. And well indeed ſhe might, for I have hired an apartment for not leſs than two ſhillings of their money every week. But her civility did not reſt here; for at parting, being deſirous to know the hour, and perceiving my watch out of order, ſhe kindly took it to be repaired by a relation of her own, which you may imagine will ſave ſome expence, and ſhe aſſures me that it will coſt her nothing. I ſhall have it back in a few days when mended, and am preparing a proper ſpeech expreſſive of my gratitude on the occaſion: 'Celeſtial excellence,' I intend to ſay, 'happy I am in having 'found out, after many painful adventures, a land of innocence, and a people of humanity: I may rove into 'other climes, and converſe with nations yet unknown, but where ſhall I 'meet a ſoul of ſuch purity as that 'which reſides in thy breaſt! Sure 'thou haſt been nurtured by the bill of 'the Shin Shin, or ſucked the breaſts 'of the provident Gin Hiung. The 'melody of thy voice could rob the 'Chong Fou of her whelps, or inveigle 'the Boh that lives in the midſt of the 'waters. Thy ſervant ſhall ever retain 'a ſenſe of thy favours; and one day 'boaſt of thy virtue, ſincerity, and 'truth, among the daughters of China.' Adieu.

LETTER IX.

TO THE SAME.

I Have been deceived! ſhe whom I fancied a daughter of Paradiſe has proved to be one of the infamous diſciples of Han! I have loſt a trifle, I have gained the conſolation of having diſcovered a deceiver. I once more, therefore, relax, into my former indifference with regard to the Engliſh ladies, they once more begin to appear diſagreeable in my eyes: thus is my whole time paſſed in forming concluſions which the next minute's experience may probably deſtroy; the preſent moment becomes a comment on the paſt, and I improve rather in humility than wiſdom.

Their laws and religion forbid the Engliſh to keep more than one woman, I therefore concluded that proſtitutes were baniſhed from ſociety; I was deceived; every man here keeps as many wives as he can maintain; the laws are cemented with blood, praiſed and diſregarded. The very Chineſe, whoſe religion allows him two wives, takes not half the liberties of the Engliſh in this particular. Their laws may be compared to the books of the Sybils, they are held in great veneration, but ſeldom read, or ſeldomer underſtood; even thoſe who pretend to be their guardians diſpute about the meaning of many of them, and confeſs their ignorance of others. The law therefore which commands them to have but one wife, is ſtrictly obſerved only by thoſe for whom one is more than ſufficient, or by ſuch as have not money to buy two. As for the reſt, they violate it publicly, and ſome glory in it's violation. They ſeem to think like the Perſians, that they give evident marks of manhood by encreaſing their ſeraglio. A mandarine therefore here generally keeps four wives, a gentleman three, and a ſtage-player two. As for the magiſtrates, the country juſtices, and

ſquires, they are employed firſt in debauching young virgins, and then puniſhing the tranſgreſſion.

From ſuch a picture you will be apt to conclude, that he who employs four ladies for his amuſement, has four times as much conſtitution to ſpare as he who is contented with one; that a mandarine is much cleverer than a gentleman, and a gentleman than a player, and yet it is quite the reverſe; a mandarine is frequently ſupported on ſpindle ſhanks, appears emaciated by luxury, and is obliged to have recourſe to variety, merely from the weakneſs, not the vigour of his conſtitution, the number of his wives being the moſt equivocal ſymptom of his virility.

Beſide the country ſquire, there is alſo another ſet of men, whoſe whole employment conſiſts in corrupting beauty; theſe the ſilly part of the fair ſex call amiable; the more ſenſible part of them, however, give them the title of abominable. You will probably demand what are the talents of a man thus careſſed by the majority of the oppoſite ſex; what talents, or what beauty is he poſſeſſed of ſuperior to the reſt of his fellows. To anſwer you directly, he has neither talents nor beauty, but then he is poſſeſſed of impudence and aſſiduity. With aſſiduity and impudence, men of all ages, and all figures, may commence admirers. I have even been told of ſome who made profeſſions of expiring for love, when all the world could perceive they were going to die of old age: and what is more ſurpriſing ſtill, ſuch battered beaus are generally moſt infamouſly ſucceſsful.

A fellow of this kind employs three hours every morning in dreſſing his head, by which is underſtood only his hair.

He is a profeſſed admirer, not of any particular lady, but of the whole ſex.

He is to ſuppoſe every lady has caught cold every night, which gives him an opportunity of calling to ſee how ſhe does the next morning.

He is upon all occaſions to ſhew himſelf in very great pain for the ladies; if a lady even drops a pin, he is to fly in order to preſent it.

He never ſpeaks to a lady without advancing his mouth to her ear, by which he frequently addreſſes more ſenſes than one.

Upon proper occaſions he looks exceſſively tender. This is performed by laying his hand upon his heart, ſhutting his eyes, and ſhewing his teeth.

He is exceſſively fond of dancing a minuet with the ladies, by which is only meant walking round the floor eight or ten times with his hat on, affecting great gravity, and ſometimes looking tenderly on his partner.

He never affronts any man himſelf, and never reſents an affront from another.

He has an infinite variety of ſmall talk upon all occaſions, and laughs when he has nothing more to ſay.

Such is the killing creature who proſtrates himſelf to the ſex till he has undone them; all whoſe ſubmiſſions are the effects of deſign, and who to pleaſe the ladies almoſt becomes himſelf a lady.

LETTER X.

TO THE SAME.

I Have hitherto given you no account of my journey from China to Europe, of my travels through countries, where Nature ſports in primeval rudeneſs, where ſhe pours forth her wonders in ſolitude; countries, from whence the rigorous climate, the ſweeping inundation, the drifted deſart, the howling foreſt, and mountains of immeaſurable height, baniſh the huſbandman, and ſpread extenſive deſolation; countries where the brown Tartar wanders for a precarious ſubſiſtence, with an heart that never felt pity, himſelf more hideous than the wilderneſs he makes.

You will eaſily conceive the fatigue of croſſing vaſt tracts of land, either deſolate, or ſtill more dangerous by it's inhabitants. The retreat of men, who ſeem driven from ſociety, in order to make war upon all the human race; nominally profeſſing a ſubjection to Moſcovy or China, but without any reſemblance to the countries on which they depend.

After I had croſſed the great wall, the firſt object that preſented were the remains of deſolated cities, and all the magnificence of venerable ruin. There were to be ſeen temples of beautiful ſtructure,

ſtructure, ſtatues wrought by the hand of a maſter, and around a country of luxuriant plenty; but not one ſingle inhabitant to reap the bounties of nature. Theſe were proſpects that might humble the pride of kings, and repreſs human vanity. I aſked my guide the cauſe of ſuch deſolation. 'Theſe countries,' ſays he, 'were once the dominions of 'a Tartar prince; and theſe ruins the 'ſeat of arts, elegance, and eaſe. This 'prince waged an unſucceſsful war 'with one of the emperors of China; 'he was conquered, his cities plunder-'ed, and all his ſubjects carried into 'captivity. Such are the effects of the 'ambition of Kings! "Ten Derviſes," 'ſays the Indian proverb, "ſhall ſleep "in peace upon a ſingle carpet, while "two kings ſhall quarrel, though they "have kingdoms to divide them." 'Sure, my friend, the cruelty and the 'pride of man have made more deſarts 'than Nature ever made! ſhe is kind, 'but man is ungrateful!'

Proceeding in my journey through this penſive ſcene of deſolated beauty, in a few days I arrived among the Daures, a nation ſtill dependent on China. Xaizigar is their principal city, which, compared with thoſe of Europe, ſcarcely deſerves the name. The governors and other officers, who are ſent yearly from Pekin, abuſe their authority, and often take the wives and daughters of the inhabitants to themſelves. The Daures, accuſtomed to baſe ſubmiſſion, feel no reſentment at thoſe injuries, or ſtifle what they feel. Cuſtom and neceſſity teach even barbarians the ſame art of diſſimulation that ambition and intrigue inſpire in the breaſts of the polite. Upon beholding ſuch unlicenſed ſtretches of power—'Alas!' thought I, 'how little does our wiſe and good em-'peror know of theſe intolerable ex-'actions! theſe provinces are too diſtant 'for complaint, and too inſignificant 'to expect redreſs. The more diſtant 'the government, the honeſter ſhould 'be the governor to whom it is entruſt-'ed; for hope of impunity is a ſtrong 'inducement to violation.'

The religion of the Daures is more abſurd than even that of the ſectaries of Fohi. How would you be ſurprized, O ſage diſciple and follower of Confucius! you who believe one eternal intelligent Cauſe of all, ſhould you be preſent at the barbarous ceremonies of this infatuated people! How would you deplore the blindneſs and folly of mankind! His boaſted reaſon ſeems only to light him aſtray, and brutal inſtinct more regularly points out the path to happineſs. Could you think it? They adore a wicked divinity; they fear him, and they worſhip him; they imagine him a malicious being, ready to injure and ready to be appeaſed. The men and women aſſemble at midnight in a hut, which ſerves for a temple. A prieſt ſtretches himſelf on the ground, and all the people pour forth the moſt horrid cries, while drums and timbrels ſwell the infernal concert. After this diſſonance, miſcalled muſic, has continued about two hours, the prieſt riſes from the ground, aſſumes an air of inſpiration, grows big with the inſpiring dæmon, and pretends to ſkill in futurity.

In every country, my friend, the bonzes, the brachmans, and the prieſts, deceive the people; all reformations begin from the laity; the prieſts point us out the way to heaven with their fingers, but ſtand ſtill themſelves, nor ſeem to travel towards the country in view.

The cuſtoms of this people correſpond to their religion; they keep their dead for three days on the ſame bed where the perſon died; after which they bury him in a grave moderately deep, but with the head ſtill uncovered. Here for ſeveral days they preſent him with different ſorts of meats; which, when they perceive he does not conſume, they fill up the grave, and deſiſt from deſiring him to eat for the future. How, how can mankind be guilty of ſuch ſtrange abſurdity, to entreat a dead body, already putrid, to partake of the banquet! Where, I again repeat it, is human reaſon! not only ſome men, but whole nations, ſeem diveſted of it's illumination. Here we obſerve a whole country adoring a divinity through fear, and attempting to feed the dead. Theſe are their moſt ſerious and moſt religious occupations; are theſe men rational, or are not the apes of Borneo more wiſe?

Certain I am, O thou inſtructor of my youth! that without philoſophers, without ſome few virtuous men, who ſeem to be of a different nature from the reſt of mankind, without ſuch as theſe, the worſhip of a wicked divinity would ſurely be eſtabliſhed over every part of the earth. Fear guides more to their duty than gratitude: for one man who

is virtuous from the love of virtue, from the obligation which he thinks he lies under to the Giver of all; there are ten thousand who are good only from their apprehensions of punishment. Could these last be persuaded, as the Epicureans were, that heaven had no thunders in store for the villain, they would no longer continue to acknowledge subordination, or thank that Being who gave them existence. Adieu.

LETTER XI.

TO THE SAME.

FROM such a picture of Nature in primeval simplicity, tell me, my much respected friend, are you in love with fatigue and solitude? Do you sigh for the severe frugality of the wandering Tartar, or regret being born amidst the luxury and dissimulation of the polite? Rather tell me, has not every kind of life vices peculiarly it's own? Is it not a truth, that refined countries have more vices, but those not so terrible, barbarous nations few, and they of the most hideous complexion? Perfidy and fraud are the vices of civilized nations, credulity and violence those of the inhabitants of the desart. Does the luxury of the one produce half the evils of the inhumanity of the other? Certainly those philosophers who declaim against luxury have but little understood it's benefits; they seem insensible, that to luxury we owe not only the greatest part of our knowledge, but even of our virtues.

It may sound fine in the mouth of a declaimer, when he talks of subduing our appetites, of teaching every sense to be content with a bare sufficiency, and of supplying only the wants of nature; but is there not more satisfaction in indulging those appetites, if with innocence and safety, than in restraining them? Am not I better pleased in enjoyment than in the sullen satisfaction of thinking that I can live without enjoyment? The more various our artificial necessities, the wider is our circle of pleasure; for all pleasure consists in obviating necessities as they rise; luxury, therefore, as it encreases our wants, encreases our capacity for happiness.

Evamine the history of any country remarkable for opulence and wisdom, you will find they would never have been wise had they not been first luxurious; you will find poets, philosophers, and even patriots, marching in Luxury's train. The reason is obvious; we then only are curious after knowledge, when we find it connected with sensual happiness. The senses ever point out the way, and reflection comments upon the discovery. Inform a native of the desart of Kobi, of the exact measure of the parallax of the moon, he finds no satisfaction at all in the information; he wonders how any could take such pains, and lay out such treasures in order to solve so useless a difficulty; but connect it with his happiness, by shewing that it improves navigation, that by such an investigation he may have a warmer coat, a better gun, or a finer knife, and he is instantly in raptures at so great an improvement. In short, we only desire to know what we desire to possess; and whatever we may talk against it, luxury adds the spur to curiosity, and gives us a desire of becoming more wise.

But not our knowledge only, but our virtues, are improved by luxury. Observe the brown savage of Thibet, to whom the fruits of the spreading pomegranate supply food, and it's branches an habitation. Such a character has few vices I grant, but those he has are of the most hideous nature; rapine and cruelty are scarce crimes in his eye; neither pity nor tenderness, which ennoble every virtue, have any place in his heart; he hates his enemies, and kills those he subdues. On the other hand, the polite Chinese and civilized European seem even to love their enemies. I have just now seen an instance where the English have succoured those enemies whom their own countrymen actually refused to relieve.

The greater the luxuries of every country, the more closely, politically speaking, is that country united. Luxury is the child of society alone, the luxurious man stands in need of a thousand different artists to furnish out his happiness; it is more likely, therefore, that

that he ſhould be a good citizen who is connected by motives of ſelf-intereſt with ſo many, than the abſtemious man who is united to none.

In whatſoever light therefore we conſider luxury, whether as employing a number of hands naturally too feeble for more laborious employment, as finding a variety of occupation for others who might be totally idle, or as furniſhing out new inlets to happineſs, without encroaching on mutual property; in whatever light we regard it, we ſhall have reaſon to ſtand up in it's defence, and the ſentiment of Confucius ſtill remains unſhaken; 'that we ſhould enjoy 'as many of the luxuries of life as are 'conſiſtent with our own ſafety, and the 'proſperity of others; and that he who 'finds out a new pleaſure is one of the 'moſt uſeful members of ſociety.'

LETTER XII.

TO THE SAME.

FROM the funeral ſolemnities of the Daures, who think themſelves the politeſt people in the world, I muſt make a tranſition to the funeral ſolemnities of the Engliſh, who think themſelves as polite as they. The numberleſs ceremonies which are uſed here when a perſon is ſick, appear to me ſo many evident marks of fear and apprehenſion. Aſk an Engliſhman, however, whether he is afraid of death, and he boldly anſwers in the negative; but obſerve his behaviour in circumſtances of approaching ſickneſs, and you will find his actions give his aſſertions the lye.

The Chineſe are very ſincere in this reſpect; they hate to die, and they confeſs their terrors: a great part of their life is ſpent in preparing things proper for their funeral; a poor artizan ſhall ſpend half his income in providing himſelf a tomb twenty years before he wants it; and denies himſelf the neceſſaries of life, that he may be amply provided for when he ſhall want them no more.

But people of diſtinction in England really deſerve pity, for they die in circumſtances of the moſt extreme diſtreſs. It is an eſtabliſhed rule, never to let a man know that he is dying: phyſicians are ſent for, the clergy are called, and every thing paſſes in ſilent ſolemnity round the ſick bed; the patient is in agonies, looks round for pity, yet not a ſingle creature will ſay that he is dying. If he is poſſeſſed of fortune, his relations entreat him to make his will, as it may reſtore the tranquillity of his mind. He is deſired to undergo the rites of the church, for decency requires it. His friends take their leave only becauſe they do not care to ſee him in pain. In ſhort, an hundred ſtratagems are uſed to make him do what he might have been induced to perform only by being told—'Sir, you are paſt all hopes, and 'had as good think decently of dying.'

Beſides all this, the chamber is darkened, the whole houſe echoes to the cries of the wife, the lamentations of the children, the grief of the ſervants, and the ſighs of friends. The bed is ſurrounded with prieſts and doctors in black, and only flambeaux emit a yellow gloom. Where is the man, how intrepid ſoever, that would not ſhrink at ſuch a hideous ſolemnity? For fear of affrighting their expiring friends, the Engliſh practiſe all that can fill them with terror. Strange effect of human prejudice, thus to torture merely from miſtaken tenderneſs!

You ſee, my friend, what contradictions there are in the tempers of thoſe iſlanders; when prompted by ambition, revenge, or diſappointment, they meet death with the utmoſt reſolution; the very man who in his bed would have trembled at the aſpect of a doctor, ſhall go with intrepidity to attack a baſtion, or deliberately nooſe himſelf up in his garters.

The paſſion of the Europeans for magnificent interments is equally ſtrong with that of the Chineſe. When a tradeſman dies, his frightful face is painted up by an undertaker, and placed in a proper ſituation to receive company; this is called lying in ſtate. To this diſagreeable ſpectacle all the idlers in town flock, and learn to loath the wretch dead, whom they deſpiſed when living. In this manner you ſee ſome who would have refuſed a ſhilling to

save the life of their dearest friend, bestow thousands on adorning their putrid corpse. I have heen told of a fellow, who, grown rich by the price of blood, left it in his will that he should lie in state, and thus unknowingly gibbeted himself into infamy, when he might have otherwise quietly retired into oblivion.

When the person is buried, the next care is to make his epitaph; they are generally reckoned best which flatter most; such relations therefore as have received most benefits from the defunct, discharge this friendly office; and generally flatter in proportion to their joy. When we read those monumental histories of the dead, it may be justly said, that 'all men are equal in the dust;' for they all appear equally remarkable for being the most sincere Christians, the most benevolent neighbours, and the honestest men of their time. To go through an European cemetery, one would be apt to wonder how mankind could have so basely degenerated from such excellent ancestors; every tomb pretends to claim your reverence and regret; some are praised for piety in those inscriptions who never entered the temple until they were dead; some are praised for being excellent poets, who were never mentioned, except for their dullness, when living; others for sublime orators, who were never noted except for their impudence; and others still for military atchievements, who were never in any other skirmishes but with the watch. Some even make epitaphs for themselves, and bespeak the reader's good-will. It were indeed to be wished, that every man would early learn, in this manner, to make his own; that he would draw it up in terms as flattering as possible; and that he would make it the employment of his whole life to deserve it!

I have not yet been in a place called Westminster Abbey, but soon intend to visit it. There I am told I shall see justice done to deceased merit; none, I am told, are permitted to be buried there but such as have adorned as well as improved mankind. There no intruders, by the influence of friends or fortune, presume to mix their unhallowed ashes with philosophers, heroes, and poets. Nothing but true merit has a place in that awful sanctuary: the guardianship of the tombs is committed to several reverend priests, who are never guilty for a superior reward of taking down the names of good men, to make room for others of equivocal character, nor ever prophane the sacred walls with pageants, that posterity cannot know, or shall blush to own.

I always was of opinion, that sepulchral honours of this kind should be considered as a national concern, and not trusted to the care of the priests of any country, how respectable soever; but from the conduct of the reverend personages, whose disinterested patriotism I shall shortly be able to discover, I am taught to retract my former sentiments. It is true, the Spartans and the Persians made a fine political use of sepulchral vanity; they permitted none to be thus interred, who had not fallen in the vindication of their country; a monument thus became a real mark of distinction, it nerved the hero's arm with tenfold vigour; and he fought without fear, who only fought for a grave. Farewell.

LETTER XIII.

FROM THE SAME.

I Am just returned from Westminster Abbey, the place of sepulture for the philosophers, heroes, and kings of England. What a gloom do monumental inscriptions and all the venerable remains of deceased merit inspire! Imagine a temple marked with the hand of antiquity, solemn as religious awe, adorned with all the magnificence of barbarous profusion, dim windows, fretted pillars, long colonades, and dark cielings. Think, then, what were my sensations at being introduced to such a scene! I stood i the midst of the temple, and threw my eyes round on the walls filled with the statues, the inscriptions, and the monuments of the dead.

'Alas!' I said to myself, 'how does 'pride attend the puny child of dust 'even to the grave! Even humble as I 'am, I possess more consequence in the 'present scene than the greatest hero of 'them

'them all; they have toiled for an hour 'to gain a transient immortality, and 'are at length retired to the grave, where 'they have no attendant but the worm, 'none to flatter but the epitaph.'

As I was indulging such reflections, a gentleman, dressed in black, perceiving me to be a stranger, came up, entered into conversation, and politely offered to be my instructor and guide through the temple. 'If any monument,' said he, 'should particularly excite your curio-'sity, I shall endeavour to satisfy your 'demands.' I accepted, with thanks, the gentleman's offer; adding, that I was come to observe the policy, the wisdom, and the justice of the English, in conferring rewards upon deceased merit. 'If adulation like this,' continued I, 'be properly conducted, as it can no 'ways injure those who are flattered, so 'it may be a glorious incentive to those 'who are now capable of enjoying it. 'It is the duty of every good govern-'ment to turn this monumental pride 'to it's own advantage, to become 'strong in the aggregate from the weak-'ness of the individual. If none but 'the truly great have a place in this 'awful repository, a temple like this 'will give the finest lessons of morality, 'and be a strong incentive to true am-'bition. I am told, that none have a 'place here but characters of the most 'distinguished merit.' The man in black seemed impatient at my observations; so I discontinued my remarks, and we walked on together to take a view of every particular monument in order as it lay.

As the eye is naturally caught by the finest objects, I could not avoid being particularly curious about one monument which appeared more beautiful than the rest; 'That,' said I to my guide, 'I take to be the tomb of some 'very great man. By the peculiar ex-'cellence of the workmanship, and the 'magnificence of the design, this must 'be a trophy raised to the memory of 'some king who has saved his country 'from ruin; or law-giver, who has re-'duced his fellow-citizens from anar-'chy into just subjection.'—'It is not 'requisite,' replied my companion, smiling, 'to have such qualifications 'in order to have a very fine monument 'here. More humble abilities will suf-'fice.'—'What, I suppose, then, the 'gaining two or three battles, or the 'taking half a score towns, is thought 'a sufficient qualification?'—'Gain-'ing battles, or taking towns,' replied the man in black, 'may be of service; 'but a gentleman may have a very fine 'monument here without ever seeing a 'battle or a siege.'—'This then is the 'monument of some poet, I presume; 'of one whose wit has gained him im-'mortality?'—'No, Sir,' replied my guide, 'the gentleman who lies here 'never made verses; and as for wit, he 'despised it in others, because he had 'none himself.'—'Pray tell me then 'in a word,' said I, peevishly, 'what 'is the great man who lies here parti-'cularly remarkable for?'—'Remark-'able, Sir!' said my companion; 'why, 'Sir, the gentleman that lies here is 'remarkable, very remarkable—for a 'tomb in Westminster Abbey.'—'But, 'head of my Ancestors! how has he 'got here? I fancy he could never bribe 'the guardians of the temple to give 'him a place: Should he not be asham-'ed to be seen among company, where 'even moderate merit would look like 'infamy?'—'I suppose,' replied the man in black, 'the gentleman was rich, 'and his friends, as is usual in such a 'case, told him he was great. He rea-'dily believed them; the guardians of 'the temple, as they got by the self-'delusion, were ready to believe him 'too; so he paid his money for a fine 'monument; and the workman, as 'you see, has made him one the most 'beautiful. Think not, however, that 'this gentleman is singular in his desire 'of being buried among the great; there 'are several others in the temple, who, 'hated and shunned by the great while 'alive, have come here, fully resolved 'to keep them company now they are 'dead.'

As we walked along to a particular part of the temple—'There,' says the gentleman, pointing with his finger, 'that is the Poets Corner; there you 'see the monuments of Shakespeare, 'and Milton, and Prior, and Drayton.' —'Drayton,' I replied, 'I never heard 'of him before; but I have been told 'of one Pope, is he there?'—'It is 'time enough,' replied my guide, 'these hundred years, he is not long 'dead, people have not done hating 'him yet.'—'Strange!' cried I, 'can 'any be found to hate a man, whose 'life was wholly spent in entertaining

'and

'and inſtructing his fellow-creatures?' —'Yes,' ſays my guide; 'they hate 'him for that very reaſon. There are 'a ſet of men called anſwerers of books, 'who take upon them to watch the re- 'public of letters, and diſtribute repu- 'tation by the ſheet; they ſomewhat 'reſemble the eunuchs in a ſeraglio, 'who are incapable of giving pleaſure 'themſelves, and hinder thoſe that 'would. Theſe anſwerers have no 'other employment but to cry out 'Dunce, and Scribbler; to praiſe the 'dead, and revile the living; to grant 'a man of confeſſed abilities ſome ſmall 'ſhare of merit, to applaud twenty 'blockheads in order to gain the repu- 'tation of candour, and to revile the 'moral character of the man whoſe writ- 'ings they cannot injure. Such wretches 'are kept in pay by ſome mercenary 'bookſeller, or more frequently, the 'bookſeller himſelf takes this dirty 'work off their hands, as all that is re- 'quired is to be very abuſive and very 'dull; every Poet of any genius is ſure 'to find ſuch enemies; he feels, though 'he ſeems to deſpiſe their malice, they 'make him miſerable here, and in the 'purſuit of empty fame, at laſt he gains 'ſolid anxiety.'

'Has this been the caſe with every 'poet I ſee here?' cried I. 'Yes, 'with every mother's ſon of them,' replied he, 'except he happened to be 'born a mandarine. If he has much 'money, he may buy reputation from 'your book anſwerers, as well as a 'monument from the guardians of the 'temple.'

'But are there not ſome men of di- 'ſtinguiſhed taſte, as in China, who are 'willing to patronize men of merit, and 'ſoften the rancour of malevolent dul- 'neſs?'

'I own there are many,' replied the man in black; 'but, alas! Sir, the 'book anſwerers croud about them, 'and call themſelves the writers of 'books; and the patron is too indolent 'to diſtinguiſh: thus poets are kept at 'a diſtance, while their enemies eat up 'all their rewards at the mandarine's 'table.'

Leaving this part of the temple, we made up to an iron gate, through which my companion told me we were to paſs in order to ſee the monuments of the kings. Accordingly I marched up, without further ceremony, and was going to enter, when a perſon, who held the gate in his hand, told me I muſt pay firſt. I was ſurpriſed at ſuch a demand; and aſked the man whether the people of England kept a *ſhew?* Whether the paltry ſum he demanded was not a national reproach? Whether it was not more to the honour of the country to let their magnificence or their antiquities be openly ſeen, than thus meanly to tax a curioſity which tended to their own honour? 'As for your queſtions,' replied the gate-keeper, 'to be ſure they 'may be very right, becauſe I don't 'underſtand them; but as for that there 'three-pence, I farm it from one, who 'rents it from another, who hires it 'from a third, who leaſes it from the 'guardians of the temple, and we all 'muſt live.' I expected, upon paying here, to ſee ſomething extraordinary, ſince what I had ſeen for nothing filled me with ſo much ſurpriſe; but in this I was diſappointed; there was little more within than black coffins, ruſty armour, tattered ſtandards, and ſome few ſlovenly figures in wax. I was ſorry I had paid, but I comforted myſelf by conſidering it would be my laſt payment. A perſon attended us, who, without once bluſhing, told an hundred lyes; he talked of a lady who died by pricking her finger, of a king with a golden head, and twenty ſuch pieces of abſurdity. 'Look ye there, gentlemen,' ſays he, pointing to an old oak chair, 'there's 'a curioſity for ye! in that chair the 'kings of England were crowned; you 'ſee alſo a ſtone underneath, and that 'ſtone is Jacob's pillow.' I could ſee no curioſity either in the oak chair or the ſtone; could I, indeed, behold one of the old kings of England ſeated in this, or Jacob's head laid upon the other, there might be ſomething curious in the ſight; but, in the preſent caſe, there was no more reaſon for my ſurprize than if I ſhould pick a ſtone from their ſtreets, and call it a curioſity, merely becauſe one of the kings happened to tread upon it as he paſſed in a proceſſion.

From hence our conductor led us through ſeveral dark walks and winding ways, uttering lyes, talking to himſelf, and flouriſhing a wand which he held in his hand. He reminded me of the black magicians of Kobi. After we had been almoſt fatigued with a variety of objects, he, at laſt, deſired me to conſider attentively

tively a certain ſuit of armour, which ſeemed to ſhew nothing remarkable. 'This armour,' ſaid he, 'belonged to 'General Monk.'—'Very ſurpriſing, 'that a general ſhould wear armour!'— 'And pray,' added he, 'obſerve this 'cap, this is General Monk's cap.'— 'Very ſtrange indeed! very ſtrange, 'that a general ſhould have a cap alſo! 'Pray, friend, what might this cap 'have coſt originally?'—'That, Sir,' ſays he, 'I don't know; but this cap 'is all the wages I have for my trouble.' —'A very ſmall recompence, truly!' ſaid I. 'Not ſo very ſmall,' replied he, 'for every gentleman puts ſome money 'into it; and I ſpend the money.'— 'What, more money! ſtill more mo-'ney!'—'Every gentleman gives ſome-'thing, Sir.'—'I'll give thee nothing,' returned I; 'the guardians of the tem-'ple ſhould pay you your wages, friend, 'and not permit you to ſqueeze thus 'from every ſpectator. When we pay 'our money at the door to ſee a ſhew, 'we never give more as we are going 'out. Sure the guardians of the tem-'ple can never think they get enough! 'Shew me the gate; if I ſtay longer, I 'may probably meet with more of thoſe 'eccleſiaſtical beggars.'

Thus leaving the temple precipitately, I returned to my lodgings, in order to ruminate over what was great, and to deſpiſe what was mean in the occurrences of the day.

LETTER XIV.

FROM THE SAME.

I Was ſome days ago agreeably ſurpriſed by a meſſage from a lady of diſtinction, who ſent me word, that ſhe moſt paſſionately deſired the pleaſure of my acquaintance; and, with the utmoſt impatience, expected an interview. I will not deny, my dear Fum Hoam, but that my vanity was raiſed at ſuch an invitation; I flattered myſelf that ſhe had ſeen me in ſome public place, and had conceived an affection for my perſon, which thus induced her to deviate from the uſual decorums of the ſex. My imagination painted her in all the bloom of youth and beauty. I fancied her attended by the Loves and Graces, and I ſet out with the moſt pleaſing expectations of ſeeing the conqueſt I had made.

When I was introduced into her apartment, my expectations were quickly at an end; I perceived a little ſhrivelled figure indolently reclined on a ſofa, who nodded by way of approbation at my approach. This, as I was afterwards informed, was the lady herſelf, a woman equally diſtinguiſhed for rank, politeneſs, taſte, and underſtanding. As I was dreſſed after the faſhion of Europe, ſhe had taken me for an Engliſhman, and conſequently ſaluted me in her ordinary manner; but when the footman informed her grace that I was the gentleman from China, ſhe inſtantly lifted herſelf from the couch, while her eyes ſparkled with unuſual vivacity. 'Bleſs 'me! can this be the gentleman that 'was born ſo far from home? What an 'unuſual ſhare of *ſomethingneſs* in his 'whole appearance! Lord, how I am 'charmed with the outlandiſh cut of 'his face! how bewitching the exotic 'breadth of his forehead! I would give 'the world to ſee him in his own coun-'try dreſs. Pray turn about, Sir, and 'let me ſee you behind. There! there's 'a travell'd air for you! You that at-'tend there, bring up a plate of beef 'cut into ſmall pieces; I have a violent 'paſſion to ſee him eat. Pray, Sir, 'have you got your chop ſticks about 'you? It will be ſo pretty to ſee the 'meat carried to the mouth with a jerk. 'Pray ſpeak a little Chineſe: I have 'learned ſome of the language myſelf. 'Lord! have you nothing pretty from 'China about you; ſomething that one 'does not know what to do with? I 'have got twenty things from China 'that are of no uſe in the world. Look 'at thoſe jars, they are of the right pea-'green: theſe are the furniture.'— 'Dear Madam,' ſaid I, 'theſe, though 'they may appear fine in your eyes, are 'but paltry to a Chineſe; but, as they 'are uſeful utenſils, it is proper they 'ſhould have a place in every apart-'ment.'—'Uſeful! Sir,' replied the lady; 'ſure you miſtake, they are of 'no uſe in the world.'—'What! are 'they not filled with an infuſion of tea 'as in China?' replied I. 'Quite 'empty and uſeleſs, upon my honour, 'Sir.'

'Sir.'—'Then they are the moſt cumbrous and clumſy furniture in the world, as nothing is truly elegant but what unites uſe with beauty.'—'I proteſt,' ſays the lady, 'I ſhall begin to ſuſpect thee of being an actual barbarian. I ſuppoſe you hold my two beautiful pagods in contempt?'—'What!' cried I, 'has Fohi ſpread his groſs ſuperſtitions here alſo? Pagods of all kinds are my averſion.'—'A Chineſe, a traveller, and want taſte! it ſurpriſes me. Pray, Sir, examine the beauties of that Chineſe temple which you ſee at the end of the garden. Is there any thing in China more beautiful?'—'Where I ſtand, I ſee nothing, Madam, at the end of the garden, that may not as well be called an Egyptian pyramid as a Chineſe temple; for that little building in view is as like the one as t'other.'—'What! Sir, is not that a Chineſe temple? You muſt ſurely be miſtaken. Mr. Freeze, who deſigned it, calls it one, and nobody diſputes his pretenſions to taſte.' I now found it vain to contradict the lady in any thing ſhe thought fit to advance; ſo was reſolved rather to act the diſciple than the inſtructor. She took me through ſeveral rooms all furniſhed, as ſhe told me, in the Chineſe manner; ſprawling dragons, ſquatting pagods, and clumſy mandarines, were ſtuck upon every ſhelf: in turning round one muſt have uſed caution not to demoliſh a part of the precarious furniture.

'In a houſe like this,' thought I, 'one muſt live continually upon the watch; the inhabitant muſt reſemble a knight in an enchanted caſtle, who expects to meet an adventure at every turning.—But, Madam,' ſaid I, 'do no accidents ever happen to all this finery?'—'Man, Sir,' replied the lady, 'is born to misfortunes, and it is but fit I ſhould have a ſhare. Three weeks ago, a careleſs ſervant ſnapped off the head of a favourite mandarine: I had ſcarce done grieving for that, when a monkey broke a beautiful jar; this I took the more to heart, as the injury was done me by a friend: however, I ſurvived the calamity; when yeſterday craſh went half a dozen dragons upon the marble hearth ſtone; and yet I live; I ſurvive it all: you can't conceive what comfort I find under afflictions from philoſophy. There is Seneca, and Bolingbroke, and ſome others, who guide me through life, and teach me to ſupport it's calamities.' I could not but ſmile at a woman who makes her own misfortunes, and then deplores the miſeries of her ſituation. Wherefore, tired of acting with diſſimulation, and willing to indulge my meditations in ſolitude, I took leave juſt as the ſervant was bringing in a plate of beef, purſuant to the directions of his miſtreſs. Adieu.

LETTER XV.

FROM THE SAME.

THE better ſort here pretend to the utmoſt compaſſion for animals of every kind. To hear them ſpeak, a ſtranger would be apt to imagine they could hardly hurt the gnat that ſtung them; they ſeem ſo tender, and ſo full of pity, that one would take them for the harmleſs friends of the whole creation; the protectors of the meaneſt inſect or reptile that was privileged with exiſtence. And yet, would you believe it? I have ſeen the very men who have thus boaſted of their tenderneſs, at the ſame time devouring the fleſh of ſix different animals toſſed up in a fricaſſee. Strange contrariety of conduct! they pity and they eat the objects of their compaſſion. The lion roars with terror over it's captive; the tiger ſends forth it's hideous ſhriek to intimidate it's prey; no creature ſhews any fondneſs for it's ſhort-lived priſoner, except a man and a cat.

Man was born to live with innocence and ſimplicity, but he has deviated from nature; he was born to ſhare the bounties of Heaven, but he has monopolized them; he was born to govern the brute creation, but he has become their tyrant. If an epicure now ſhall happen to ſurfeit on his laſt night's feaſt, twenty animals the next day are to undergo the moſt exquiſite tortures in order to provoke his appetite to another guilty meal. Hail, O ye ſimple, honeſt bramins of the Eaſt! ye inoffenſive friends of all that were born to happineſs as well as you! you

you never ſought a ſhort-lived pleaſure from the miſeries of other creatures. You never ſtudied the tormenting arts of ingenious refinement; you never ſurfeited upon a guilty meal. How much more purified and refined are all your ſenſations than ours: you diſtinguiſh every element with the utmoſt preciſion; a ſtream untaſted before is new luxury, a change of air is a new banquet, too refined for weſtern imaginations to conceive.

Though the Europeans do not hold the tranſmigration of ſouls, yet one of their doctors has, with great force of argument, and great plauſibility of reaſoning, endeavoured to prove that the bodies of animals are the habitations of dæmons and wicked ſpirits, which are obliged to reſide in theſe priſons till the reſurrection pronounces their everlaſting puniſhment; but are previouſly condemned to ſuffer all the pains and hardſhips inflicted upon them by man, or by each other here. If this be the caſe, it may frequently happen, that while we whip pigs to death, or boil live lobſters, we are putting ſome old acquaintance, ſome near relation, to excruciating tortures, and are ſerving him up to the very ſame table where he was once the moſt welcome companion.

'Kabul,' ſays the Zendaveſta, 'was 'born on the ruſhy banks of the river 'Mawra; his poſſeſſions were great, 'and his luxuries kept pace with the 'affluence of his fortune; he hated the 'harmleſs bramins, and deſpiſed their 'holy religion; every day his table was 'decked out with the fleſh of an hun'dred different animals, and his cooks 'had an hundred different ways of dreſſ'ing it, to ſolicit even ſatiety.

'Notwithſtanding all his eating, he 'did not arrive at old age, he died of 'a ſurfeit, cauſed by intemperance: 'upon this, his ſoul was carried off, in 'order to take it's trial before a ſelect 'aſſembly of the ſouls of thoſe animals 'which his gluttony had cauſed to be 'ſlain, and who were now appointed 'his judges.

'He trembled before a tribunal, to 'every member of which he had for'merly acted as an unmerciful tyrant: 'he ſought for pity, but found none 'diſpoſed to grant it. "Does he not "remember," cries the angry boar, "to what agonies I was put, not to "ſatisfy his hunger, but his vanity? I "was firſt hunted to death, and my "fleſh ſcarce thought worthy of com"ing once to his table. Were my ad"vice followed, he ſhould do penance "in the ſhape of an hog, which in life "he moſt reſembled."

"I am rather," cries a ſheep upon 'the bench, "for having him ſuffer "under the appearance of a lamb; we "may then ſend him through four or "five tranſmigrations in the ſpace of a "month."—"Were my voice of any "weight in the aſſembly," cries a calf, "he ſhould rather aſſume ſuch a form "as mine: I was bled every day, in "order to make my fleſh white, and at "laſt killed without mercy."—"Would "it not be wiſer," cries a hen, "to "cram him in the ſhape of a fowl, and "then ſmother him in his own blood as "I was ſerved?" The majority of the 'aſſembly were pleaſed with this pu'niſhment, and were going to condemn 'him without further delay, when the 'ox roſe up to give his opinion: "I "am informed," ſays this counſellor, "that the priſoner at the bar has left a "wife with child behind him. By my "knowledge in divination, I fore"ſee that this child will be a ſon, "decrepid, feeble, ſickly; a plague to "himſelf and all about him. What "ſay you, then, my companions, if we "condemn the father to animate the "body of his own ſon; and by this "means make him feel in himſelf thoſe "miſeries his intemperance muſt other"wiſe have entailed upon his poſterity?" 'The whole court applauded the inge'nuity of his torture, they thanked him 'for his advice. Kabul was driven 'once more to reviſit the earth; and his 'ſoul, in the body of his own ſon, paſſ'ed a period of thirty years, loaded 'with miſery, anxiety, and diſeaſe.'

LETTER XVI.

FROM THE SAME.

I Know not whether I am more oblig-ed to the Chinese missionaries for the instruction I have received from them, or prejudiced by the falshoods they have made me believe. By them I was told that the Pope was universally allowed to be a man, and placed at the head of the church; in England, however, they plainly prove him to be an whore in man's cloaths, and often burn him in effigy as an impostor. A thousand books have been written on either side of the question; priests are eternally dis-puting against each other; and those mouths that want argument are filled with abuse. Which party must I be-lieve, or shall I give credit to neither? When I survey the absurdities and false-hoods with which the books of the Eu-ropeans are filled, I thank Heaven for having been born in China, and that I have sagacity enough to detect impos-ture.

The Europeans reproach us with false history and fabulous chronology; how should they blush to see their own books, many of which are written by the doc-tors of their religion, filled with the most monstrous fables, and attested with the utmost solemnity. The bounds of a letter do not permit me to mention all the absurdities of this kind, which in my reading I have met with. I shall confine myself to the accounts which some of their lettered men give of the persons of some of the inhabitants on our globe. And not satisfied with the most solemn asseverations, they some-times pretend to have been eye-witnesses of what they describe.

A Christian doctor, in one of his prin-cipal performances*, says, that it was not impossible for a whole nation to have but one eye in the middle of the fore-head. He is not satisfied with leaving it in doubt; but in another work † as-sures us, that the fact was certain, and that he himself was an eye-witness of it. 'When,' says he, 'I took a journey 'into Ethiopia in company with several 'other servants of Christ, in order to 'preach the gospel there; I beheld in 'the southern provinces of the country 'a nation which had only one eye in the 'midst of their foreheads.'

You will, no doubt, be surprized, re-verend Fum, with this author's effron-tery; but, alas! he is not alone in this story; he has only borrowed it from seve-ral others who wrote before him. So-linus creates another nation of Cyclops, the Arimaspians who inhabit those countries that border on the Caspian sea. This author goes on to tell us of a peo-ple of India, who have but one leg and one eye, and yet are extremely active, run with great swiftness, and live by hunting. These people we scarce know how to pity or admire; but the men whom Pliny calls Cynamolci, who have got the heads of dogs, really deserve our compassion. Instead of language they express their sentiments by barking. Solinus confirms what Pliny mentions; and Simon Mayole, a French bishop, talks of them as of particular and fami-liar acquaintances.—'After passing the 'desarts of Egypt,' says he, 'we meet 'with the Kunokephaloi, who inhabit 'those regions that border on Ethiopia; 'they live by hunting; they cannot 'speak, but whistle; their chins resem-'ble a serpent's head; their hands are 'armed with long sharp claws; their 'breast resembles that of a greyhound; 'and they excel in swiftness and agi-'lity.' Would you think it, my friend, that these odd kind of people are, not-withstanding their figure, excessively delicate? Not even an alderman's wife, or Chinese mandarine, can excel them in this particular. 'These people,' con-'tinues our faithful bishop, 'never re-'fuse wine; love roast and boiled meat; 'they are particularly curious in hav-'ing their meat well dressed, and spurn 'at it if in the least tainted. When the 'Ptolemies reigned in Egypt,' says he, a little farther on, 'those men with dogs 'heads taught grammar and music.'

* Augustin. de Civit. Dei, lib. xvi. p. 422.
† Id. ad fratres in Eremo, Serm. xxxvii.

For

For men who had no voices to teach music, and who could not ſpeak to teach grammar, is, I confeſs a little extraordinary. Did ever the diſciples of Fohi broach any thing more ridiculous?

Hitherto we have ſeen men with heads ſtrangely deformed, and with dogs heads; but what would you ſay if you heard of men without any heads at all? Pomponius Mela, Solinus, and Aulus Gellius, deſcribe them to our hand—'The Blemiæ have a noſe, eyes, and 'mouth on their breaſts; or, as others 'will have it, placed on their ſhoulders.'

One would think that theſe authors had an antipathy to the human form, and were reſolved to make a new figure of their own: but let us do them juſtice; though they ſometimes deprive us of a leg, an arm, an head, or ſome ſuch trifling part of the body, they often as liberally beſtow upon us ſomething that we wanted before. Simon Mayole ſeems our particular friend in this reſpect: if he has denied heads to one part of mankind, he has given tails to another. He deſcribes many of the Engliſh of his time, which is not more than an hundred years ago, as having tails. His own words are as follow: 'In England there 'are ſome families which have tails, as 'a puniſhment for deriding an Auguſ'tine Friar ſent by St. Gregory, and 'who preached in Dorſetſhire. They 'ſewed the tails of different animals to 'his cloaths; but ſoon they found that 'thoſe tails entailed on them and their 'poſterity for ever.' It is certain that the author had ſome ground for this deſcription; many of the Engliſh wear tails to their wigs to this very day, as a mark, I ſuppoſe, of the antiquity of their families, and perhaps as a ſymbol of thoſe tails with which they were formerly diſtinguiſhed by nature.

You ſee, my friend, there is nothing ſo ridiculous that has not at ſome time been ſaid by ſome philoſopher. The writers of books in Europe ſeem to think themſelves authoriſed to ſay what they pleaſe; and an ingenious philoſopher among them* has openly aſſerted, that he would undertake to perſuade the whole republic of readers to believe that the ſun was neither the cauſe of light nor heat; if he could only get ſix philoſophers on his ſide. Farewell.

LETTER XVII.

FROM THE SAME.

WERE an Aſiatic politician to read the treaties of peace and friendſhip that have been annually making for more than an hundred years among the inhabitants of Europe, he would probably be ſurprized how it ſhould ever happen that Chriſtian princes could quarrel among each other. Their compacts for peace are drawn up with the utmoſt preciſion, and ratified with the greateſt ſolemnity; to theſe each party promiſes a ſincere and inviolable obedience, and all wears the appearance of open friendſhip and unreſerved reconciliation.

Yet, notwithſtanding thoſe treaties, the people of Europe are almoſt continually at war. There is nothing more eaſy than to break a treaty ratified in all the uſual forms, and yet neither party be the aggreſſor. One ſide, for inſtance, breaks a trifling article by miſtake; the oppoſite party upon this makes a ſmall but premeditated repriſal; this brings on a return of greater from the other; both ſides complain of injuries and infractions; war is declared; they beat, are beaten; ſome two or three hundred thouſand men are killed; they grow tired, leave off juſt where they began; and ſo ſit coolly down to make new treaties.

The Engliſh and French ſeem to place themſelves foremoſt among the champion ſtates of Europe. Though parted by a narrow ſea, yet are they entirely of oppoſite characters; and from their vicinity are taught to fear and admire each other. They are at preſent engaged in a very deſtructive war, have already ſpilled much blood, are exceſſively irritated; and all upon account of one ſide's deſiring to wear greater quantities of *furs* than the other.

The pretext of the war is about ſome

* Fontenelle.

lands a thousand leagues off; a country cold, desolate, and hideous; a country belonging to a people who were in possession for time immemorial. The savages of Canada claim a property in the country in dispute; they have all the pretensions which long possession can confer. Here they had reigned for ages without rivals in dominion; and knew no enemies but the prowling bear or insidious tiger; their native forests produced all the necessaries of life, and they found ample luxury in the enjoyment. In this manner they might have continued to live to eternity, had not the English been informed that those countries produced furs in great abundance. From that moment the country became an object of desire; it was found that furs were things very much wanted in England; the ladies edged some of their clothes with furs, and muffs were worn both by gentlemen and ladies. In short, furs were found indispensably necessary for the happiness of the state: and the king was consequently petitioned to grant not only the country of Canada, but all the savages belonging to it to the subjects of England, in order to have the people supplied with proper quantities of this necessary commodity.

So very reasonable a request was immediately complied with, and large colonies were sent abroad to procure furs, and take possession. The French, who were equally in want of furs, (for they were as fond of muffs and tippets as the English) made the very same request to their monarch, and met with the same gracious reception from their king, who generously granted what was not his to give. Wherever the French landed, they called the country their own; and the English took possession wherever they came upon the same equitable pretensions. The harmless savages made no opposition; and could the intruders have agreed together, they might peaceably have shared this desolate country between them. But they quarrelled about the boundaries of their settlements, about grounds and rivers to which neither side could shew any other right than that of power, and which neither could occupy but by usurpation. Such is the contest, that no honest man can heartily wish success to either party.

The war has continued for some time with various success. At first the French seemed victorious; but the English have of late dispossessed them of the whole country in dispute. Think not, however, that success on one side is the harbinger of peace: on the contrary, both parties must be heartily tired to effect even a temporary reconciliation. It should seem the business of the victorious party to offer terms of peace; but there are many in England, who, encouraged by success, are for still protracting the war.

The best English politicians, however, are sensible, that to keep their present conquests would be rather a burthen than an advantage to them, rather a diminution of their strength than an increase of power. It is in the politic as in the human constitution; if the limbs grow too large for the body, their size, instead of improving, will diminish the vigour of the whole. The colonies should always bear an exact proportion to the mother country; when they grow populous, they grow powerful; and by becoming powerful, they become independent also; thus subordination is destroyed, and a country swallowed up in the extent of it's own dominions. The Turkish empire would be more formidable, were it less extensive; were it not for those countries, which it can neither command, nor give entirely away; which it is obliged to protect, but from which it has no power to exact obedience.

Yet, obvious as these truths are, there are many Englishmen who are for transplanting new colonies into this late acquisition, for peopling the desarts of America with the refuse of their countrymen, and, (as they express it) with the waste of an exuberant nation. But who are those unhappy creatures who are to be thus drained away? Not the sickly, for they are unwelcome guests abroad as well as at home; nor the idle, for they would starve as well behind the Applachian mountains as in the streets of London. This refuse is composed of the laborious and enterprizing, of such men as can be serviceable to their country at home, of men who ought to be regarded as the sinews of the people, and cherished with every degree of political indulgence. And what are the commodities which this colony, when established, are to produce in return? Why, raw silk, hemp, and tobacco. England, therefore, must make an exchange of her best and bravest subjects

for

Corbould del. Grignion sculp.

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for raw ſilk, hemp, and tobacco; her hardy veterans and honeſt tradeſmen, muſt be trucked for a box of ſnuff or a ſilk petticoat. Strange abſurdity! ſure the politics of the Daures are not more ſtrange, who ſell their religion, their wives and their liberty, for a glaſs bead, or a paltry penknife. Farewell.

LETTER XVIII.

FROM THE SAME.

THE Engliſh love their wives with much paſſion, the Hollanders with much prudence. The Engliſh, when they give their hands, frequently give their hearts; the Dutch give the hand, but keep the heart wiſely in their own poſſeſſion. The Engliſh love with violence, and expect violent love in return; the Dutch are ſatisfied with the ſlighteſt acknowledgments, for they give little away. The Engliſh expend many of the matrimonial comforts in the firſt year; the Dutch frugally huſband out their pleaſures, and are always conſtant, becauſe they are always indifferent.

There ſeems very little difference between a Dutch bridegroom and a Dutch huſband. Both are equally poſſeſſed of the ſame cool unexpecting ſerenity; they can ſee neither Elyſium nor Paradiſe behind the curtain; and *Yiffrow* is not more a goddeſs on the wedding night, than after twenty years matrimonial acquaintance. On the other hand, many of the Engliſh marry, in order to have one happy month in their lives; they ſeem incapable of looking beyond that period; they unite in hopes of finding rapture, and diſappointed in that, diſdain ever to accept of happineſs. From hence we ſee open hatred enſue; or, what is worſe, concealed diſguſt under the appearance of fulſome endearment. Much formality, great civility, and ſtudied compliments, are exhibited in public; croſs looks, ſulky ſilence, or open recrimination, fill up their hours of private entertainment.

Hence I am taught, whenever I ſee a new-married couple more than ordinarily fond before faces, to conſider them as attempting to impoſe upon the company or themſelves, either hating each other heartily, or conſuming that ſtock of love in the beginning of their courſe, which ſhould ſerve them through their whole journey. Neither ſide ſhould expect thoſe inſtances of kindneſs which are inconſiſtent with true freedom or happineſs to beſtow. Love, when founded in the heart, will ſhew itſelf in a thouſand unpremeditated ſallies of fondneſs; but every cool deliberate exhibition of the paſſion, only argues little underſtanding, or great inſincerity.

Choang was the fondeſt huſband, and Hanſi the moſt endearing wife, in all the kingdom of Korea: they were a pattern of conjugal bliſs; the inhabitants of the country around ſaw, and envied their felicity; wherever Choang came, Hanſi was ſure to follow; and in all the pleaſures of Hanſi, Choang was admitted a partner. They walked hand in hand wherever they appeared, ſhewing every mark of mutual ſatisfaction, embracing, kiſſing, their mouths were for ever joined; and, to ſpeak in the language of anatomy, it was with them one perpetual anaſtomoſis.

Their love was ſo great, that it was thought nothing could interrupt their mutual peace; when an accident happened, which in ſome meaſure diminiſhed the huſband's aſſurance of his wife's fidelity; for love ſo refined as his was ſubject to a thouſand little diſquietudes.

Happening to go one day alone among the tombs that lay at ſome diſtance from his houſe, he there perceived a lady dreſſed in the deepeſt mourning, (being cloathed all over in white) fanning the wet clay that was raiſed over one of the graves with a large fan, which ſhe held in her hand. Choang, who had early been taught wiſdom in the ſchool of Lao, was unable to aſſign a cauſe for her preſent employment; and coming up, civilly demanded the reaſon. 'Alas,' replied the lady, her eyes bathed in tears, 'how is it poſſible to ſurvive the loſs of 'my huſband, who lies buried in this 'grave! He was the beſt of men, the 'tendereſt of huſbands: with his dying 'breath he bid me never marry again 'till the earth over his grave ſhould be 'dry; and here you ſee me ſteadily re-'ſolving

'solving to obey his will, and endea-'vouring to dry it with my fan. I have 'employed two whole days in fulfilling 'his commands, and am determined not 'to marry till they are punctually obey-'ed, even though his grave should take 'up four days in drying.'

Choang, who was struck with the widow's beauty, could not, however, avoid smiling at her haste to be married; but, concealing the cause of his mirth, civilly invited her home; adding, that he had a wife who might be capable of giving her some consolation. As soon as he and his guest were returned, he imparted to Hansi in private what he had seen, and could not avoid expressing his uneasiness, that such might be his own case if his dearest wife should one day happen to survive him.

It is impossible to describe Hansi's resentment at so unkind a suspicion. As her passion for him was not only great, but extremely delicate, she employed tears, anger, frowns, and exclamations, to chide his suspicions; the widow herself was inveighed against; and Hansi declared she was resolved never to sleep under the same roof with a wretch, who, like her, could be guilty of such barefaced inconstancy. The night was cold and stormy; however, the stranger was obliged to seek another lodging, for Choang was not disposed to resist, and Hansi would have her way.

The widow had scarce been gone an hour, when an old disciple of Choang's, whom he had not seen for many years, came to pay him a visit. He was received with the utmost ceremony, placed in the most honourable seat at supper, and the wine began to circulate with great freedom. Choang and Hansi exhibited open marks of mutual tenderness, and unfeigned reconciliation: nothing could equal their apparent happiness; so fond an husband, so obedient a wife, few could behold without regretting their own infelicity. When, lo! their happiness was at once disturbed by a most fatal accident. Choang fell lifeless in an apoplectic fit upon the floor. Every method was used, but in vain, for his recovery. Hansi was at first inconsolable for his death: after some hours, however, she found spirits to read his last will. The ensuing day she began to moralize and talk wisdom; the next day she was able to comfort the young disciple; and, on the third, to shorten a long story, they both agreed to be married.

There was now no longer mourning in the apartments; the body of Choang was now thrust into an old coffin, and placed in one of the meanest rooms, there to lie unattended until the time prescribed by law for his interment. In the mean time Hansi, and the young disciple, were arrayed in the most magnificent habits; the bride wore in her nose a jewel of immense price, and her lover was dressed in all the finery of his former master, together with a pair of artificial whiskers that reached down to his toes. The hour of their nuptials was arrived; the whole family sympathized with their approaching happiness; the apartments were brightened up with lights that diffused the most exquisite perfume, and a lustre more bright than noon day. The lady expected her youthful lover in an inner apartment with impatience; when his servant approaching with terror in his countenance, informed her, that his master was fallen into a fit, which would certainly be mortal, unless the heart of a man lately dead could be obtained, and applied to his breast. She scarce waited to hear the end of his story, when, tucking up her cloaths, she ran with a mattock in her hand to the coffin, where Choang lay, resolving to apply the heart of her dead husband as a cure for the living. She therefore struck the lid with the utmost violence. In a few blows the coffin flew open, when the body, which to all appearance had been dead, began to move. Terrified at the sight, Hansi dropped the mattock, and Choang walked out, astonished at his own situation, his wife's unusual magnificence, and her more amazing surprize. He went among the apartments, unable to conceive the cause of so much splendor. He was not long in suspence before his domestics informed him of every transaction since he first became insensible. He could scarce believe what they told him, and went in pursuit of Hansi herself, in order to receive more certain information, or to reproach her infidelity. But she prevented his reproaches: he found her weltering in blood; for she had stabbed herself to the heart, being unable to survive her shame and disappointment.

Choang, being a philosopher, was too wise to make any loud lamentations; he

he thought it beſt to bear his loſs with ſerenity; ſo, mending up the old coffin where he had lain himſelf, he placed his faithleſs ſpouſe in his room; and, unwilling that ſo many nuptial preparations ſhould be expended in vain, he the ſame night married the widow with the large fan.

As they both were appriſed of the foibles of each other before hand, they knew how to excuſe them after marriage. They lived together for many years in great tranquillity, and not expecting rapture, made a ſhift to find contentment. Farewell.

LETTER XIX.

TO THE SAME.

THE gentleman dreſſed in black, who was my companion through Weſtminſter Abbey, came yeſterday to pay me a viſit; and after drinking tea, we both reſolved to take a walk together, in order to enjoy the freſhneſs of the country, which now begins to reſume it's verdure. Before we got out of the ſuburbs, however, we were ſtopped in one of the ſtreets by a crowd of people, gathered in a circle round a man and his wife, who ſeemed too loud and too angry to be underſtood. The people were highly pleaſed with the diſpute, which upon enquiry we found to be between Dr. Cacafogo, an apothecary, and his wife. The doctor, it ſeems, coming unexpectedly into his wife's apartment, found a gentleman there in circumſtances not in the leaſt equivocal.

The doctor, who was a perſon of nice honour, reſolving to revenge the flagrant inſult, immediately flew to the chimney-piece, and taking down a ruſty blunderbuſs, drew the trigger upon the defiler of his bed; the delinquent would certainly have been ſhot through the head, but that the piece had not been charged for many years. The gallant made a ſhift to eſcape through the window, but the lady ſtill remained; and, as ſhe well knew her huſband's temper, undertook to manage the quarrel without a ſecond. He was furious, and ſhe loud; their noiſe had gathered all the mob, who charitably aſſembled on the occaſion, not to prevent, but to enjoy, the quarrel.

'Alas,' ſaid I to my companion, 'what will become of this unhappy 'creature thus caught in adultery! Believe me, I pity her from my heart; 'her huſband, I ſuppoſe, will ſhew her 'no mercy. Will they burn her as in 'India, or behead her as in Perſia? Will 'they load her with ſtripes as in Turkey, 'or keep her in perpetual impriſonment, 'as with us in China? Pr'ythee, what 'is the wife's puniſhment in England 'for ſuch offences?'—'When a lady is 'thus caught tripping,' replied my companion, 'they never puniſh her, but the 'huſband.'—'You ſurely jeſt,' interrupted I; 'I am a foreigner, and you 'would abuſe my ignorance!'—'I am 'really ſerious,' returned he. 'Dr. 'Cacafogo has caught his wife in the 'act; but as he had no witneſſes, his 'ſmall teſtimony goes for nothing; the 'conſequence, therefore, of his diſcovery will be, that ſhe may be packed 'off to live among her relations, and 'the doctor muſt be obliged to allow 'her a ſeparate maintenance.'—'Amazing!' cried I; 'is it not enough that 'ſhe is permitted to live ſeparate from 'the object ſhe deteſts, but muſt he give 'her money to keep her in ſpirits too?' —'That he muſt,' ſays my guide; 'and 'be called a cuckold by all his neighbours into the bargain. The men 'will laugh at him, the ladies will pity 'him; and all that his warmeſt friends 'can ſay in his favour, will be, that the "poor good ſoul has never had any "harm in him."'—'I want patience,' interrupted I; 'what! are there no private 'chaſtiſements for the wife; no ſchools 'of penitence to ſhew her her folly; 'no rods for ſuch delinquents?'—'Pſha, 'man,' replied he, ſmiling; 'if every 'delinquent among us were to be treated in your manner, one half of the 'kingdom would flog the other.'

I muſt confeſs, my dear Fum, that if I were an Engliſh huſband, of all things I would take care not to be jealous, nor buſily pry into thoſe ſecrets my wife was pleaſed to keep from me. Should I detect her infidelity, what is the conſequence? If I calmly pocket the abuſe, I am laughed at by her and her gallant;

gallant; if I talk my griefs aloud like a tragedy hero, I am laughed at by the whole world. The courſe then I would take would be, whenever I went out, to tell my wife where I was going, leſt I ſhould unexpectedly meet her abroad in company with ſome dear deceiver. Whenever I returned, I would uſe a peculiar rap at the door, and give four loud hems as I walked deliberately up the ſtair-caſe. I would never inquiſitively peep under her bed, or look behind the curtains. And even though I knew the captain was there, I would calmly take a diſh of my wife's cool tea, and talk of the army with reverence.

Of all nations, the Ruſſians ſeem to me to behave moſt wiſely in ſuch circumſtances. The wife promiſes her huſband never to let him ſee her tranſgreſſions of this nature; and he as punctually promiſes, whenever ſhe is ſo detected, without the leaſt anger, to beat her without mercy: ſo they both know what each has to expect; the lady tranſgreſſes, is beaten, taken again into favour, and all goes on as before.

When a Ruſſian young lady, therefore, is to be married, her father, with a cudgel in his hand, aſks the bridegroom whether he chuſes this virgin for his bride? to which the other replies in the affirmative. Upon this, the father turning the lady three times round, and giving her three ſtrokes with his cudgel on the back—'My dear,' cries he, 'theſe are the laſt blows you are 'ever to receive from your tender fa'ther; I reſign my authority, and my 'cudgel, to your huſband; he knows 'better than me the uſe of either.' The bridegroom knows decorums too well to accept of the cudgel abruptly; he aſſures the father that the lady will never want it, and that he would not for the world make any uſe of it. But the father, who knows what the lady may want better than he, inſiſts upon his acceptance. Upon this, there follows a ſcene of Ruſſian politeneſs, while one refuſes, and the other offers, the cudgel. The whole, however, ends with the bridegroom's taking it, upon which the lady drops a curtſey in token of obedience, and the ceremony proceeds as uſual.

There is ſomething exceſſively fair and open in this method of courtſhip. By this, both ſides are prepared for all the matrimonial adventures that are to follow. Marriage has been compared to a game of ſkill for life; it is generous thus in both parties to declare they are ſharpers in the beginning. In England, I am told, both ſides uſe every art to conceal their defects from each other before marriage, and the reſt of their lives may be regarded as doing penance for their former diſſimulation. Farewell.

LETTER XX.

FROM THE SAME.

THE *Republic of Letters* is a very common expreſſion among the Europeans; and yet, when applied to the learned of Europe, is the moſt abſurd that can be imagined, ſince nothing is more unlike a republic than the ſociety which goes by that name. From this expreſſion one would be apt to imagine, that the learned were united into a ſingle body, joining their intereſts, and concurring in the ſame deſign. From this one might be apt to compare them to our literary ſocieties in China, where each acknowledges a juſt ſubordination; and all contribute to build the temple of ſcience, without attempting from ignorance or envy to obſtruct each other.

But very different is the ſtate of learning here; every member of this fancied republic is deſirous of governing, and none willing to obey; each looks upon his fellow as a rival, not an aſſiſtant, in the ſame purſuit. They calumniate, they injure, they deſpiſe, they ridicule each other: if one man writes a book that pleaſes, others ſhall write books to ſhew that he might have given ſtill greater pleaſure, or ſhould not have pleaſed. If one happens to hit upon ſomething new, there are numbers ready to aſſure the public that all this was no novelty to them or the learned; that Cardanus or Brunus, or ſome other author too dull to be generally read, had anticipated the diſcovery. Thus, inſtead of uniting like the members of commonwealth,

wealth, they are divided into almoſt as many factions as there are men; and their jarring conſtitution, inſtead of being ſtiled a republic of letters, ſhould be entitled, an anarchy of literature.

It is true, there are ſome of ſuperior abilities who reverence and eſteem each other; but their mutual admiration is not ſufficient to ſhield off the contempt of the crowd. The wiſe are but few, and they praiſe with a feeble voice; the vulgar are many, and roar in reproaches. The truly great ſeldom unite in ſocieties, have few meetings, no cabals; the dunces hunt in full cry till they have run down a reputation, and then ſnarl and fight with each other about dividing the ſpoil. Here you may ſee the compilers, and the book-anſwerers of every month, when they have cut up ſome reſpectable name, moſt frequently reproaching each other with ſtupidity and dullneſs: reſembling the wolves of the Ruſſian foreſt, who prey upon veniſon, or horſe fleſh when they can get it; but in caſes of neceſſity, lying in wait to devour each other. While they have new books to cut up, they make a hearty meal; but if this reſource ſhould unhappily fail, then it is that critics eat up critics, and compilers rob from compilations.

Confucius obſerves that it is the duty of the learned to unite ſociety more cloſely, and to perſuade men to become citizens of the world; but the authors I refer to, are not only for diſuniting ſociety, but kingdoms alſo; if the Engliſh are at war with France, the dunces of France think it their duty to be at war with thoſe of England. Thus Freron, one of their firſt rate ſcribblers, thinks proper to characteriſe all the Engliſh writers in the groſs. 'Their whole 'merit,' ſays he, 'conſiſts in exaggera'tion, and often in extravagance; correct 'their pieces as you pleaſe, there ſtill 'remains a leaven which *corrupts* the 'whole. They ſometimes diſcover ge'nius, but not the ſmalleſt ſhare of 'taſte; England is not a ſoil for the 'plants of genius to thrive in.' This is open enough, with not the leaſt adulation in the picture; but hear what a Frenchman of acknowledged abilities ſays upon the ſame ſubject—'I am at a 'loſs to determine in what we excel the 'Engliſh, or where they excel us; when 'I compare the merits of both in any 'one ſpecies of literary compoſition, ſo 'many reputable and pleaſing writers 'preſent themſelves from either country, 'that my judgment reſts in ſuſpence: I 'am pleaſed with the diſquiſition, with'out finding the object of my enquiry.' But leſt you ſhould think the French alone are faulty in this reſpect, hear how an Engliſh journaliſt delivers his ſentiments of them.* 'We are amazed,' ſays he, 'to find ſo many works tranſ'lated from the French, while we have 'ſuch numbers neglected of our own. 'In our opinion, notwithſtanding their 'fame throughout the reſt of Europe, 'the French are the moſt contemptible 'reaſoners (we had almoſt ſaid writers) 'that can be imagined. However, ne'vertheleſs, excepting, &c.' Another Engliſh writer, Shaftſbury, if I remember, on the contrary, ſays, that the French authors are pleaſing and judicious, more clear, more methodical, and entertaining, than thoſe of his own country.

From theſe oppoſite pictures, you perceive that the good authors of either country praiſe, and the bad revile each other; and yet, perhaps, you will be ſurprized that indifferent writers ſhould thus be the moſt apt to cenſure, as they have the moſt to apprehend from recrimination; you may, perhaps, imagine, that ſuch as are poſſeſſed of fame themſelves ſhould be moſt ready to declare their opinions, ſince what they ſay might paſs for deciſion. But the truth happens to be, that the great are ſolicitous only of raiſing their own reputations, while the oppoſite claſs, alas! are ſolicitous of bringing every reputation down to a level with their own.

But let us acquit them of malice and envy; a critic is often guided by the ſame motives that direct his author. The author endeavours to perſuade us, that he has written a good book: the critic is equally ſolicitous to ſhew that he could write a better, had he thought proper. A critic is a being poſſeſſed of all the vanity, but not the genius, of a ſcholar: incapable, from his native weakneſs, of lifting himſelf from the ground, he applies to contiguous merit for ſupport, makes the ſportive ſallies of another's imagination his ſerious employment, pretends to take our feelings under his care, teaches where to condemn, where to lay the emphaſis of praiſe, and may with as much juſtice be called a man of taſte, as the Chineſe who meaſures

ſures his wiſdom by the length of his nails.

If then a book, ſpirited or humourous, happens to appear in the republic of letters, ſeveral critics are in waiting to bid the public not to laugh at a ſingle line of it, for themſelves had read it; and they know what is moſt proper to to excite laughter. Other critics contradict the fulminations of this tribunal, call them all ſpiders, and aſſure the public, that they ought to laugh without reſtraint. Another ſet are in the mean time quietly employed in writing notes to the book, intended to ſhew the particular paſſages to be laughed at; when theſe are out, others ſtill there are who write notes upon notes. Thus a ſingle new book employs not only the paper-makers, the printers, the preſſmen, the book-binders, the hawkers, but twenty critics, and as many compilers. In ſhort, the body of the learned may be compared to a Perſian army, where there are many pioneers, ſeveral ſutlers, numberleſs ſervants, women and children in abundance, and but few ſoldiers. Adieu.

LETTER XXI.

TO THE SAME.

THE Engliſh are as fond of ſeeing plays acted as the Chineſe; but there is a vaſt difference in the manner of conducting them. We play our pieces in the open air, the Engliſh theirs under cover; we act by day-light, they by the blaze of torches. One of our plays continues eight or ten days ſucceſſively; an Engliſh piece ſeldom takes up above four hours in the repreſentation.

My companion in black, with whom I am now beginning to contract an intimacy, introduced me a few nights ago to the play-houſe, where we placed ourſelves conveniently at the foot of the ſtage. As the curtain was not drawn before my arrival, I had an opportunity of obſerving the behaviour of the ſpectators, and indulging thoſe reflections which novelty generally inſpires.

The rich in general were placed in the loweſt ſeats, and the poor roſe above them in degrees proportioned to their poverty. The order of precedence ſeemed here inverted; thoſe who were undermoſt all the day, now enjoyed a temporary eminence, and became maſters of the ceremonies. It was they who called for the muſic, indulging every noiſy freedom, and teſtifying all the inſolence of beggary in exaltation.

They who held the middle region ſeemed not ſo riotous as thoſe above them, nor yet ſo tame as thoſe below; to judge by their looks, many of them ſeemed ſtrangers there as well as myſelf. They were chiefly employed during this period of expectation in eating oranges, reading the ſtory of the play, or making aſſignations.

Thoſe who ſat in the loweſt rows, which are called the pit, ſeemed to conſider themſelves as judges of the merit of the poet and the performers; they were aſſembled partly to be amuſed, and partly to ſhew their taſte; appearing to labour under that reſtraint which an affectation of ſuperior diſcernment generally produces. My companion, however, informed me, that not one in an hundred of them knew even the firſt principles of criticiſm; that they aſſumed the right of being cenſors becauſe there was none to contradict their pretenſions; and that every man who now called himſelf a connoiſſeur, became ſuch to all intents and purpoſes.

Thoſe who ſat in the boxes appeared in the moſt unhappy ſituation of all. The reſt of the audience came merely for their own amuſement; theſe rather to furniſh out a part of the entertainment themſelves. I could not avoid conſidering them as acting parts in dumb ſhew; not a curtſey or nod, that was not the reſult of art; not a look nor a ſmile that was not deſigned for murder. Gentlemen and ladies ogled each other through ſpectacles; for my companion obſerved, that blindneſs was of late become faſhionable, all affected indifference and eaſe, while their hearts at the ſame time burned for conqueſt. Upon the whole, the lights, the muſic, the ladies in their gayeſt dreſſes, the men with chearfulneſs and expectation in their looks, all conſpired to make a moſt agreeable

able picture, and to fill an heart that sympathizes at human happiness with inexpressible serenity.

The expected time for the play to begin at last arrived, the curtain was drawn, and the actors came on. A woman, who personated a queen, came in curtseying to the audience, who clapped their hands upon her appearance. Clapping of hands is, it seems, the manner of applauding in England: the manner is absurd; but every country, you know, has it's peculiar absurdities. I was equally surprised, however, at the submission of the actress, who should have considered herself as a queen, as at the little discernment of the audience who gave her such marks of applause before she attempted to deserve them. Preliminaries between her and the audience being thus adjusted, the dialogue was supported between her and a most hopeful youth, who acted the part of her confidant. They both appeared in extreme distress; for it seems the queen had lost a child some fifteen years before, and still keeps it's dear resemblance next her heart, while her kind companion bore a part in her sorrows.

Her lamentations grew loud. Comfort is offered, but she detests the very sound. She bids them preach comfort to the winds. Upon this her husband comes in, who seeing the queen so much afflicted, can himself hardly refrain from tears, or avoid partaking in the soft distress. After thus grieving through three scenes, the curtain dropped for the first act.

'Truly,' said I to my companion, 'these kings and queens are very much disturbed at no very great misfortune; certain I am, were people of humbler stations to act in this manner, they would be thought divested of common sense.' I had scarce finished this observation, when the curtain rose, and the king came on in a violent passion. His wife had, it seems, refused his proffered tenderness, had spurned his royal embrace; and he seemed resolved not to survive her fierce disdain. After he had thus fretted, and the queen had fretted through the second act, the curtain was let down once more.

'Now,' says my companion, 'you perceive the king to be a man of spirit, he feels at every pore; one of your phlegmatic sons of clay would have given the queen her own way, and let her come to herself by degrees; but the king is for immediate tenderness, or instant death: death and tenderness are leading passions of every modern buskined hero; this moment they embrace, and the next stab, mixing daggers and kisses in every period.'

I was going to second his remarks, when my attention was engrossed by a new object; a man came in balancing a straw upon his nose, and the audience were clapping their hands in all the raptures of applause. 'To what purpose,' cried I, 'does this unmeaning figure make his appearance; is he a part of the plot?'—'Unmeaning do you call him?' replied my friend in black; 'this is one of the most important characters of the whole play; nothing pleases the people more than seeing a straw balanced; there is a great deal of meaning in the straw; there is something suited to every apprehension in the sight; and a fellow possessed of talents like these is sure of making his fortune.'

The third act now began with an actor, who came to inform us that he was the villain of the play, and intended to shew strange things before all was over. He was joined by another, who seemed as much disposed for mischief as he; their intrigues continued through this whole division. 'If that be a villain,' said I, 'he must be a very stupid one, to tell his secrets without being asked; such soliloquies of late are never admitted in China.'

The noise of clapping interrupted me once more; a child of six years old was learning to dance on the stage, which gave the ladies and mandarines infinite satisfaction. 'I am sorry,' said I, 'to see the pretty creature so early learning so very bad a trade; dancing being, I presume, as contemptible here as in China.'—'Quite the reverse,' interrupted my companion; 'dancing is a very reputable and genteel employment here; men have a greater chance for encouragement from the merit of their heels than their heads. One who jumps up and flourishes his toes three times before he comes to the ground, may have three hundred a year; he who flourishes them four times, gets four hundred; but he who arrives at five is inestimable, and may demand what salary he thinks proper. The female dancers too are valued for this

'sort of jumping and crossing; and 'tis 'a cant word among them, that she deserves most who shews highest. But 'the fourth act is begun, let us be 'attentive.'

In the fourth act the queen finds her long lost child, now grown up into a youth of smart parts and great qualifications; wherefore she wisely considers that the crown will fit his head better than that of her husband, whom she knows to be a driveler. The king discovers her design, and here comes on the deep distress; he loves the queen, and he loves the kingdom; he resolves therefore, in order to possess both, that her son must die. The queen exclaims at his barbarity; is frantic with rage, and at length overcome with sorrow, falls into a fit; upon which the curtain drops, and the act is concluded.

'Observe the art of the poet,' cries my companion; 'when the queen can 'say no more, she falls into a fit. While 'thus her eyes are shut, while she is 'supported in the arms of Abigal, what 'horrors do we not fancy, we feel it in 'every nerve; take my word for it, that 'fits are the true aposiopesis of modern 'tragedy.'

The fifth act began, and a busy piece it was. Scenes shifting, trumpets sounding, mobs hallooing, carpets spreading, guards bustling from one door to another; gods, dæmons, daggers, racks, and ratsbane. But whether the king was killed, or the queen was drowned, or the son was poisoned, I have absolutely forgotten.

When the play was over, I could not avoid observing, that the persons of the drama appeared in as much distress in the first act as the last. 'How is it possible,' said I, 'to sympathize with 'them through five long acts; pity is 'but a short-lived passion; I hate to 'hear an actor mouthing trifles, neither 'startings, strainings, nor attitudes, affect me unless there be cause: after I 'have been once or twice deceived by 'those unmeaning alarms, my heart 'sleeps in peace, probably unaffected 'by the principal distress. There should 'be one great passion aimed at by the 'actor as well as the poet, all the rest 'should be subordinate, and only contribute to make that the greater; if the 'actor therefore exclaims upon every 'occasion in the tones of despair, he attempts to move us too soon; he anticipates the blow, he ceases to affect, 'though he gains our applause.'

I scarce perceived that the audience were almost all departed; wherefore, mixing with the crowd, my companion and I got into the street; where essaying an hundred obstacles from coach wheels and palanquin poles, like birds in their flight through the branches of a forest, after various turnings, we both at length got home in safety. Adieu.

LETTER XXII.

FROM THE SAME.

THE letter which came by the way of Smyrna, and which you sent me unopened, was from my son. As I have permitted you to take copies of all those I send to China, you might have made no ceremony in opening those directed to me. Either in joy or sorrow, my friend should participate in my feelings. 'It would give pleasure to see a 'good man pleased at my success; it 'would give almost equal pleasure to see 'him sympathize at my disappointment.'

Every account I receive from the East seems to come loaded with some new affliction. My wife and daughter were taken from me, and yet I sustained the loss with intrepidity; my son is made a slave among the barbarians, which was the only blow which could have reached my heart: yes, I will indulge the transports of nature for a little, in order to shew I can overcome them in the end. 'True magnanimity consists not in 'NEVER falling, but in RISING every 'time we fall.'

When our mighty emperor had published his displeasure at my departure, and seized upon all that was mine, my son was privately secreted from his resentment. Under the protection and guardianship of Fum Hoam, the best and wisest of all the inhabitants of China, he was for some time instructed in the learning of the missionaries, and the wisdom

wiſdom of the Eaſt. But hearing of my adventures, and incited by filial piety, he was reſolved to follow my fortunes, and ſhare my diſtreſs.

He paſſed the confines of China in diſguiſe; hired himſelf as a camel-driver to a caravan that was croſſing the deſarts of Thibet, and was within one day's journey of the river Laur, which divides that country from India, when a body of wandering Tartars falling unexpectedly upon the caravan, plundered it, and made thoſe who eſcaped their firſt fury ſlaves. By thoſe he was led into the extenſive and deſolate regions that border on the ſhores of the Aral lake.

Here he lived by hunting; and was obliged to ſupply every day a certain proportion of the ſpoil to regale his ſavage maſters; his learning, his virtues, and even his beauty, were qualifications that no way ſerved to recommend him; they knew no merit but that of providing large quantities of milk and raw fleſh; and were ſenſible of no happineſs but that of rioting on the undreſſed meal.

Some merchants from Meſched, however, coming to trade with the Tartars for ſlaves, he was ſold among the number, and led into the kingdom of Perſia, where he is now detained. He is there obliged to watch the looks of a voluptuous and cruel maſter, a man fond of pleaſure, yet incapable of refinement, whom many years ſervice in war has taught pride, but not bravery.

That treaſure which I ſtill keep within my boſom, my child, my all that was left to me, is now a ſlave*. Good heavens! why was this? Why have I been introduced into this mortal apartment, to be a ſpectator of my own misfortunes, and the misfortunes of my fellow-creatures! Wherever I turn, what a labyrinth of doubt, error, and diſappointment appears! Why was I brought into being; for what purpoſes made; from whence have I come; whither ſtrayed; or to what regions am I haſtening?—Reaſon cannot reſolve. It lends a ray to ſhew the horrors of my priſon, but not a light to guide me to eſcape them. Ye boaſted revelations of the earth, how little do you aid the enquiry!

How am I ſurpriſed at the inconſiſtency of the magi! their two principles of good and evil affright me. The Indian who bathes his viſage in urine, and calls it piety, ſtrikes me with aſtoniſhment. The Chriſtian who believes in three gods is highly abſurd. The Jews who pretend that deity is pleaſed with the effuſion of blood, are not leſs diſpleaſing. I am equally ſurprized that rational beings can come from the extremities of the earth, in order to kiſs a ſtone, or ſcatter pebbles. How contrary to reaſon are thoſe! and yet all pretend to teach me to be happy.

Surely all men are blind and ignorant of truth. Mankind wanders, unknowing his way, from morning till the evening. Where ſhall we turn after happineſs; or is it wiſeſt to deſiſt from the purſuit? Like reptiles in a corner of ſome ſtupendous palace, we peep from our holes, look about us, wonder at all we ſee, but are ignorant of the great Architect's deſign. O for a revelation of himſelf, for a plan of his univerſal ſyſtem! O for the reaſons of our creation; or why we were created to be thus unhappy! If we are to experience no other felicity but what this life affords, then are we miſerable indeed. If we are born only to look about us, repine, and die; then has Heaven been guilty of injuſtice. If this life terminates my exiſtence, I deſpiſe the bleſſings of Providence, and the wiſdom of the Giver. If this life be my all, let the following epitaph be written on the tomb of Altangi. 'By my father's crimes I received this. By my own crimes I bequeath it to poſterity!'

* This whole apoſtrophe ſeems moſt literally tranſlated from Ambulaaohamed, the Arabian poet.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

TO THE SAME.

YET, while I ſometimes lament the caſe of humanity, and the depravity of human nature, there now and then appear gleams of greatneſs that ſerve to relieve the eye oppreſſed with the hideous proſpect, and reſemble thoſe cultivated ſpots that are ſometimes found in the midſt of an Aſiatic wildneſs. I ſee many ſuperior excellencies among the Engliſh, which it is not in the power of all their follies to hide: I ſee virtues, which in other countries are known only to a few, practiſed here by every rank of people.

I know not whether it proceeds from their ſuperior opulence that the Engliſh are more charitable than the reſt of mankind; whether, by being poſſeſſed of all the conveniencies of life themſelves, they have more leiſure to perceive the uneaſy ſituation of the diſtreſſed; whatever be the motive, they are not only the moſt charitable of any other nation, but moſt judicious in diſtinguiſhing the propereſt objects of compaſſion.

In other countries the giver is generally influenced by the immediate impulſe of pity; his generoſity is exerted as much to relieve his own uneaſy ſenſations, as to comfort the object in diſtreſs: in England benefactions are of a more general nature; ſome men of fortune and univerſal benevolence propoſe the proper objects; the wants and the merits of the petitioners are canvaſſed by the people; neither paſſion nor pity find a place in the cool diſcuſſion; and charity is then only exerted when it has received the approbation of reaſon.

A late inſtance of this finely-directed benevolence forces itſelf ſtrongly on my imagination, that it in a manner reconciles me to pleaſure, and once more makes me the univerſal friend of man.

The Engliſh and French have not only political reaſons to induce them to mutual hatred, but often the more prevailing motive of private intereſt to widen the breach; a war between other countries is carried on collectively, army fights againſt army, and a man's own private reſentment is loſt in that of the community; but in England and France the individuals of each country plunder each other at ſea without redreſs, and conſequently feel that animoſity againſt each other which paſſengers do at a robber. They have for ſome time carried on an expenſive war; and ſeveral captives have been taken on both ſides. Thoſe made priſoners by the French have been uſed with cruelty, and guarded with unneceſſary caution. Thoſe taken by the Engliſh, being much more numerous, were confined in the ordinary manner; and, not being releaſed by their countrymen, began to feel all thoſe inconveniencies which ariſe from want of covering and long confinement.

Their countrymen were informed of their deplorable ſituation; but they, more intent on annoying their enemies than relieving their friends, refuſed the leaſt aſſiſtance. The Engliſh now ſaw thouſands of their fellow-creatures ſtarving in every priſon, forſaken by thoſe whoſe duty it was to protect them, labouring with diſeaſe, and without cloaths to keep off the ſeverity of the ſeaſon. National benevolence prevailed over national animoſity: their priſoners were indeed enemies, but they were enemies in diſtreſs; they ceaſed to be hateful, when they no longer continued to be formidable: forgetting, therefore, their national hatred, the men who were brave enough to conquer, were generous enough to forgive: and they, whom all the world ſeemed to have diſclaimed, at laſt found pity and redreſs from thoſe they attempted to ſubdue. A ſubſcription was opened, ample charities collected, proper neceſſaries procured, and the poor gay ſons of a merry nation were once more taught to reſume their former gaiety.

When I caſt my eye over the liſt of thoſe who contributed on this occaſion, I find the names almoſt entirely Engliſh; ſcarce one foreigner appears among the number. It was for Engliſhmen alone to be capable of ſuch exalted virtue. I own, I cannot look over this catalogue of good men and philoſophers, without thinking better of myſelf, becauſe it makes me entertain a more favourable opinion

opinion of mankind. I am particularly ſtruck with one who writes theſe words upon the paper that encloſed his benefaction: 'The mite of an Engliſhman, 'a citizen of the world, to Frenchmen, 'priſoners of war, and naked.' I only wiſh that he may find as much pleaſure from his virtues, as I have done in reflecting upon them; that alone will amply reward him. Such a one, my friend, is an honour to human nature; he makes no private diſtinctions of party; all that are ſtamped with the divine image of their Creator are friends to him; he is a 'native of the world;' and the Emperor of China may be proud that he has ſuch a countryman.

To rejoice at the deſtruction of our enemies, is a foible grafted upon human nature, and we muſt be permitted to indulge it: the true way of atoning for ſuch an ill-founded pleaſure, is thus to turn our triumph into an act of benevolence, and to teſtify our own joy by endeavouring to baniſh anxiety from others.

Hamti, the beſt and wiſeſt emperor that ever filled the throne, after having gained three ſignal victories over the Tartars, who had invaded his dominions, returned to Nankin in order to enjoy the glory of his conqueſt. After he had reſted for ſome days, the people, who are naturally fond of proceſſions, impatiently expected the triumphant entry, which emperors upon ſuch occaſions were accuſtomed to make. Their murmurs came to the emperor's ear. He loved his people, and was willing to do all in his power to ſatisfy their juſt deſires. He therefore aſſured them, that he intended, upon the next feaſt of the Lanthorns, to exhibit one of the moſt glorious triumphs that had ever been ſeen in China.

The people were in raptures at his condeſcenſion; and, on the appointed day, aſſembled at the gates of the palace with the moſt eager expectations. Here they waited for ſome time without ſeeing any of thoſe preparations which uſually precede a pageant. The lanthorn, with ten thouſand tapers, was not yet brought forth; the fire-works, which uſually covered the city walls, were not yet lighted; the people once more began to murmur at this delay; when, in the midſt of their impatience, the palace gates flew open, and the emperor himſelf appeared, not in ſplendour or magnificence, but in an ordinary habit, followed by the blind, the maimed, and the ſtrangers of the city, all in new cloaths, and each carrying in his hand money enough to ſupply his neceſſities for the year. The people were at firſt amazed, but ſoon perceived the wiſdom of their king, who taught them, that to make one man happy, was more truly great than having ten thouſand captives groaning at the wheels of his chariot. Adieu.

LETTER XXIV.

TO THE SAME.

WHATEVER may be the merits of the Engliſh in other ſciences, they ſeem peculiarly excellent in the art of healing. There is ſcarcely a diſorder incident to humanity, againſt which they are not poſſeſſed with a moſt infallible antidote. The profeſſors of other arts confeſs the inevitable intricacy of things; talk with doubt, and decide with heſitation; but doubting is entirely unknown in medicine; the advertiſing profeſſors here delight in caſes of difficulty; be the diſorder never ſo deſperate or radical, you will find numbers in every ſtreet, who, by levelling a pill at the part affected, promiſe a certain cure without loſs of time, knowledge of a bedfellow, or hindrance of buſineſs.

When I conſider the aſſiduity of this profeſſion, their benevolence amazes me. They not only in general give their medicines for half value, but uſe the moſt perſuaſive remonſtrances to induce the ſick to come and be cured. Sure there muſt be ſomething ſtrangely obſtinate in an Engliſh patient, who refuſes ſo much health upon ſuch eaſy terms. Does he take a pride in being bloated with a dropſy? Does he find pleaſure in the alternations of an intermittent fever? Or feel as much ſatisfaction in nurſing up his gout, as he found pleaſure in acquiring it? He muſt, otherwiſe he would never reject

reject ſuch repeated aſſurances of inſtant relief. What can be more convincing than the manner in which the ſick are invited to be well? The doctor firſt begs the moſt earneſt attention of the public to what he is going to propoſe; he ſolemnly affirms the pill was never found to want ſucceſs; he produces a liſt of thoſe who have been reſcued from the grave by taking it. Yet, notwithſtanding all this, there are many here who now and then think proper to be ſick; only ſick, did I ſay? There are ſome who even think proper to die! Yes, by the head of Confucius, they die; though they might have purchaſed the health-reſtoring ſpecific for half a crown at every corner.

I am amazed, my dear Fum Hoam, that theſe doctors, who know what an obſtinate ſet of people they have to deal with, have never thought of attempting to revive the dead. When the living are found to reject their preſcriptions, they ought in conſcience to apply to the dead, from whom they can expect no ſuch mortifying repulſes; they would find in the dead the moſt complying patients imaginable; and what gratitude might they not expect from the patient's ſon, now no longer an heir; and his wife, now no longer a widow?

Think not, my friend, that there is any thing chimerical in ſuch an attempt; they already perform cures equally ſtrange: What can be more truly aſtoniſhing than to ſee old age reſtored to youth, and vigour to the moſt feeble conſtitutions? Yet this is performed here every day; a ſimple electuary effects theſe wonders, even without the bungling ceremonies of having the patient boiled up in a kettle, or ground down in a mill.

Few phyſicians here go through the ordinary courſes of education, but receive all their knowledge of medicine by immediate inſpiration from Heaven. Some are thus inſpired even in the womb; and, what is very remarkable, underſtand their profeſſion as well at three years old as at threeſcore. Others have ſpent a great part of their lives unconſcious of any latent excellence, till a bankruptcy, or a reſidence in gaol, have called their miraculous powers into exertion. And others ſtill there are, indebted to their ſuperlative ignorance alone for ſucceſs. The more ignorant the practitioner, the leſs capable is he thought of deceiving. The people here judge, as they do in the Eaſt; where it is thought abſolutely requiſite that a man ſhould be an ideot before he pretend to be either a conjuror or a doctor.

When a phyſician by inſpiration is ſent for, he never perplexes the patient by previous examination; he aſks very few queſtions, and thoſe only for form ſake. He adminiſters the pill or drop for every diſtemper; nor is more inquiſitive than the farrier when he drenches an horſe. If the patient lives, then has he one more to add to his ſurviving liſt; if he dies, then it may be juſtly ſaid of the patient's diſorder, 'that as it was 'not cured, the diſorder was incurable.'

LETTER XXV.

FROM THE SAME.

I Was ſome days ago in company with a politician, who very pathetically declaimed upon the miſerable ſituation of his country: he aſſured me, that the whole political machine was moving in a wrong track, and that ſcarce even abilities like his own could ever ſet it right again. 'What have 'we,' ſaid he, 'to do with the wars on 'the Continent? we are a commercial 'nation; we have only to cultivate 'commerce like our neighbours the 'Dutch; it is our buſineſs to encreaſe 'trade by ſettling new colonies: riches 'are the ſtrength of a nation; and for 'the reſt, our ſhips, our ſhips alone, 'will protect us.' I found it vain to oppoſe my feeble arguments to thoſe of a man who thought himſelf wiſe enough to direct even the miniſtry; I fancied, however, that I ſaw with more certainty, becauſe I reaſoned without prejudice: I therefore begged leave, inſtead of argument, to relate a ſhort hiſtory. He gave me a ſmile at once of condeſcenſion and contempt, and I proceeded as follows to deſcribe, THE RISE AND DECLENSION OF THE KINGDOM OF LAO.

NORTH-

NORTHWARD of China, and in one of the doublings of the great wall, the fruitful province of Lao enjoyed it's liberty, and a peculiar government of it's own. As the inhabitants were on all ſides ſurrounded by the wall, they feared no ſudden invaſion from the Tartars; and being each poſſeſſed of property, they were zealous in it's defence.

The natural conſequences of ſecurity and affluence in any country, is a love of pleaſure; when the wants of nature are ſupplied, we ſeek after the conveniencies; when poſſeſſed of theſe, we deſire the luxuries of life; and when every luxury is provided, it is then ambition takes up the man, and leaves him ſtill ſomething to wiſh for: the inhabitants of the country, from primitive ſimplicity, ſoon began to aim at elegance, and from elegance proceeded to refinement. It was now found abſolutely requiſite, for the good of the ſtate, that the people ſhould be divided: formerly the ſame hand that was employed in tilling the ground, or in dreſſing up the manufactures, was alſo, in time of need, a ſoldier; but the cuſtom was now changed; for it was perceived, that a man bred up from childhood to the arts either of peace or war, became more eminent by this means in his reſpective profeſſion. The inhabitants were therefore now diſtinguiſhed into artizans and ſoldiers; and while thoſe improved the luxuries of life, theſe watched for the ſecurity of the people.

A country poſſeſſed of freedom has always two ſorts of enemies to fear: foreign foes, who attack it's exiſtence from without; and internal miſcreants, who betray it's liberties within. The inhabitants of Lao were to guard againſt both. A country of artizans were moſt likely to preſerve internal liberty; and a nation of ſoldiers were fitteſt to repel a foreign invaſion. Hence naturally aroſe a diviſion of opinion between the artizans and ſoldiers of the kingdom. The artizans ever complaining, that freedom was threatened by an armed internal force, were for diſbanding the ſoldiers, and inſiſted that their walls, their walls alone, were ſufficient to repel the moſt formidable invaſion: the warriors, on the contrary, repreſented the power of the neighbouring kings, the combinations formed againſt their ſtate, and the weakneſs of the wall which every earthquake might overturn. While this altercation continued, the kingdom might be juſtly ſaid to enjoy it's greateſt ſhare of vigour: every order in the ſtate, by being watchful over each other, contributed to diffuſe happineſs equally, and balanced the ſtate. The arts of peace flouriſhed, nor were thoſe of war neglected; the neighbouring powers, who had nothing to apprehend from the ambition of men whom they only ſaw ſolicitous not for riches but freedom, were contented to traffic with them: they ſent their goods to be manufactured in Lao, and paid a large price for them upon their return.

By theſe means this people at length became moderately rich, and their opulence naturally invited the invader; a Tartar prince led an immenſe army againſt them, and they as bravely ſtood up in their own defence; they were ſtill inſpired with a love of their country; they fought the barbarous enemy with fortitude, and gained a compleat victory.

From this moment, which they regarded as the completion of their glory, hiſtorians date their downfall. They had riſen in ſtrength by a love of their country, and fell by indulging ambition. The country poſſeſſed by the invading Tartars, ſeemed to them a prize that would not only render them more formidable for the future, but which would encreaſe their opulence for the preſent; it was unanimouſly reſolved, therefore, both by ſoldiers and artizans, that thoſe deſolate regions ſhould be peopled by colonies from Lao. When a trading nation begins to act the conqueror, it is then perfectly undone: it ſubſiſts in ſome meaſure by the ſupport of it's neighbours; while they continue to regard it without envy or apprehenſion, trade may flouriſh; but when once it preſumes to aſſert as it's right what is only enjoyed as a favour, each country reclaims that part of commerce which it has power to take back, and turns it into ſome other channel more honourable, though perhaps leſs convenient.

Every neighbour now began to regard with jealous eyes this ambitious commonwealth, and forbade their ſubjects any future intercourſe with them. The inhabitants of Lao, however, ſtill purſued the ſame ambitious maxims; it was from their colonies alone they expected riches; 'and riches,' ſaid they, 'are 'ſtrength, and ſtrength is ſecurity.'

F Numberleſs

Numberleſs were the migrations of the deſperate and enterprizing of this country, to people the deſolate dominions lately poſſeſſed by the Tartar; between theſe colonies and the mother country, a very advantageous traffic was at firſt carried on; the republic ſent their colonies large quantities of the manufactures of the country, and they in return provided the republic with an equivalent in ivory and ginſeng. By this means the inhabitants became immenſely rich, and this produced an equal degree of voluptuouſneſs; for men who have much money will always find ſome fantaſtical modes of enjoyment. How ſhall I mark the ſteps by which they declined! Every colony, in proceſs of time, ſpreads over the whole country where it firſt was planted. As it grows more populous, it becomes more polite; and thoſe manufactures for which it was in the beginning obliged to others, it learns to dreſs up itſelf: ſuch was the caſe with the colonies of Lao; they in leſs than a century became a powerful and a polite people; and the more polite they grew, the leſs advantageous was the commerce which ſtill ſubſiſted between them and others. By this means the mother country, being abridged in it's commerce, grew poorer, but not leſs luxurious. Their former wealth had introduced luxury; and wherever luxury once fixes, no art can either leſſen or remove it. Their commerce with their neighbours was totally deſtroyed; and that with their colonies was every day naturally and neceſſarily declining; they ſtill, however, preſerved the inſolence of wealth, without a power to ſupport it; and perſevered in being luxurious, while contemptible from poverty. In ſhort, the ſtate reſembled one of thoſe bodies bloated with diſeaſe, whoſe bulk is only a ſymptom of it's wretchedneſs.

Their former opulence only rendered them more impotent, as thoſe individuals who are reduced from riches to poverty, are of all men the moſt unfortunate and helpleſs. They had imagined, becauſe their colonies tended to make them rich upon the firſt acquiſition, they would ſtill continue to do ſo; they now found, however, that on themſelves alone they ſhould have depended for ſupport; that colonies ever afforded but temporary affluence, and when cultivated and polite are no longer uſeful. From ſuch a concurrence of circumſtances they ſoon became contemptible. The Emperor Honti invaded them with a powerful army. Hiſtorians do not ſay whether their colonies were too remote to lend aſſiſtance, or elſe were deſirous of ſhaking off their dependance: but certain it is, they ſcarce made any reſiſtance; their walls were now found but a weak defence; and they at length were obliged to acknowledge ſubjection to the empire of China.

'Happy, very happy, might they have been, had they known when to bound their riches and their glory. Had they known, that extending empire is often diminiſhing power; that countries are ever ſtrongeſt which are internally powerful; that colonies, by draining away the brave and enterprizing, leave the country in the hands of the timid and the avaricious; that walls give little protection, unleſs manned with reſolution; that too much commerce may injure a nation as well as too little; and that there is a wide difference between a conquering and a flouriſhing empire. Adieu.

LETTER XXVI.

TO THE SAME.

THOUGH fond of many acquaintances, I deſire an intimacy only with a few. The man in black whom I have often mentioned, is one whoſe friendſhip I could wiſh to acquire, becauſe he poſſeſſes my eſteem. His manners, it is true, are tinctured with ſome ſtrange inconſiſtencies; and he may be juſtly termed an humouriſt in a nation of humouriſts. Though he is generous even to profuſion, he affects to be thought a prodigy of parſimony and prudence; though his converſation be replete with the moſt ſordid and ſelfiſh maxims, his heart is dilated with the moſt unbounded love. I have known him profeſs himſelf a man-hater, while his cheek was glowing with compaſſion; and while his

his looks were ſoftened into pity, I have heard him uſe the language of unbounded ill-nature. Some affect humanity and tenderneſs, others boaſt of having ſuch diſpoſitions from Nature; but he is the only man I ever knew who ſeemed aſhamed of his natural benevolence. He takes as much pains to hide his feelings as any hypocrite would to conceal his indifference; but on every unguarded moment the maſk drops off, and reveals him to the moſt ſuperficial obſerver.

In one of our late excurſions into the country, happening to diſcourſe upon the proviſion that was made for the poor in England, he ſeemed amazed how any of his countrymen could be ſo fooliſhly weak as to relieve occaſional objects of charity, when the laws had made ſuch ample proviſion for their ſupport. 'In 'every pariſh houſe,' ſays he, 'the poor 'are ſupplied with food, cloaths, fire, 'and a bed to lie on; they want no 'more, I deſire no more myſelf; yet 'ſtill they ſeem diſcontented. I'm ſurprized at the inactivity of our magiſtrates, in not taking up ſuch vagrants 'who are only a weight upon the induſtrious; I'm ſurprized that the people are found to relieve them, when 'they muſt be at the ſame time ſenſible 'that it, in ſome meaſure, encourages 'idleneſs, extravagance, and impoſture. 'Were I to adviſe any man for whom 'I had the leaſt regard, I would caution him by all means not to be impoſed upon by their falſe pretences: 'let me aſſure you, Sir, they are impoſtors, every one of them; and rather 'merit a priſon than relief.'

He was proceeding in this ſtrain earneſtly, to diſſuade me from an imprudence of which I am ſeldom guilty; when an old man, who ſtill had about him the remnants of tattered finery, implored our compaſſion. He aſſured us that he was no common beggar, but forced into the ſhameful profeſſion, to ſupport a dying wife and five hungry children. Being prepoſſeſſed againſt ſuch falſhoods, his ſtory had not the leaſt influence upon me; but it was quite otherwiſe with the man in black; I could ſee it viſibly operate upon his countenance, and effectually interrupt his harangue. I could eaſily perceive that his heart burned to relieve the five ſtarving children, but he ſeemed aſhamed to diſcover his weakneſs to me. While he thus heſitated between compaſſion and pride, I pretended to look another away, and he ſeized this opportunity of giving the poor petitioner a piece of ſilver, bidding him at the ſame time, in order that I ſhould not hear, go work for his bread, and not teaze paſſengers with ſuch impertinent falſhoods for the future.

As he had fancied himſelf quite unperceived, he continued, as we proceeded, to rail againſt beggars with as much animoſity as before; he threw in ſome epiſodes on his own amazing prudence and œconomy, with his profound ſkill in diſcovering impoſtors; he explained the manner in which he would deal with beggars were he a magiſtrate, hinted at enlarging ſome of the priſons for their reception, and told two ſtories of ladies that were robbed by beggarmen. He was beginning a third to the ſame purpoſe, when a ſailor with a wooden leg once more croſſed our walks, deſiring our pity, and bleſſing our limbs. I was for going on without taking any notice, but my friend looking wiſhfully upon the poor petitioner, bid me ſtop, and he would ſhew me with how much eaſe he could at any time detect an impoſtor.

He now therefore aſſumed a look of importance, and in an angry tone began to examine the ſailor, demanding in what engagement he was thus diſabled and rendered unfit for ſervice. The ſailor replied in a tone as angrily as he, that he had been an officer on board a private ſhip of war, and that he had loſt his leg abroad in defence of thoſe who did nothing at home. At this reply, all my friend's importance vaniſhed in a moment; he had not a ſingle queſtion more to aſk; he now only ſtudied what method he ſhould take to relieve him unobſerved. He had however no eaſy part to act, as he was obliged to preſerve the appearance of ill-nature before me, and yet relieve himſelf by relieving the ſailor. Caſting therefore a furious look upon ſome bundles of chips which the fellow carried in a ſtring at his back, my friend demanded how he ſold his matches; but not waiting for a reply, deſired, in a ſurly tone, to have a ſhilling's worth. The ſailor ſeemed at firſt ſurprized at his demand, but ſoon recollected himſelf, and preſenting his

whole bundle—'Here, master,' says he, 'take all my cargo, and a blessing 'into the bargain.'

It is impossible to describe with what an air of triumph my friend marched off with his new purchase; he assured me that he was firmly of opinion that those fellows must have stolen their goods, who could thus afford to sell them for half value; he informed me of several different uses to which those chips might be applied; he expatiated largely upon the savings that would result from lighting candles with a match instead of thrusting them into the fire. He averred, that he would as soon have parted with a tooth as his money to those vagabonds, unless for some valuable consideration. I cannot tell how long this panegyric upon frugality and matches might have continued, had not his attention been called off by another object more distressful than either of the former. A woman in rags, with one child in her arms, and another on her back, was attempting to sing ballads, but with such a mournful voice that it was difficult to determine whether she was singing or crying. A wretch, who, in the deepest distress still aimed at good-humour, was an object my friend was by no means capable of withstanding: his vivacity and his discourse were instantly interrupted; upon this occasion his very dissimulation had forsaken him. Even, in my presence, he immediately applied his hands to his pockets, in order to relieve her; but guess his confusion, when he found he had already given away all the money he carried about him to former objects. The misery painted in the woman's visage was not half so strongly expressed as the agony in his. He continued to search for some time, but to no purpose, till, at length, recollecting himself, with a face of ineffable good nature, as he had no money, he put into her hands his shilling's worth of matches.

LETTER XXVII.

TO THE SAME.

As there appeared something reluctantly good in the character of my companion, I must own it surprized me what could be his motives for thus concealing virtues which others take such pains to display. I was unable to repress my desire of knowing the history of a man who thus seemed to act under continual restraint, and whose benevolence was rather the effect of appetite than reason.

It was not however till after repeated solicitations he thought proper to gratify my curiosity. 'If you are fond,' says he, 'of hearing "hair-breadth "'scapes," my history must certainly 'please; for I have been for twenty 'years upon the very verge of starving, 'without ever being starved.

'My father, the younger son of a 'good family, was possessed of a small 'living in the church. His education 'was above his fortune, and his generosity greater than his education. 'Poor as he was, he had his flatterers 'still poorer than himself; for every 'dinner he gave them, they returned 'him an equivalent in praise; and this 'was all he wanted: the same ambition 'that actuates a monarch at the head of 'an army, influenced my father at the 'head of his table; he told the story of 'the Ivy-Tree, and that was laughed at; 'he repeated the jest of the Two Scholars 'and One Pair of Breeches, and the company laughed at that; but the story of 'Taffy in the Sedan Chair was sure to 'set the table in a roar: thus his pleasure encreased in proportion to the 'pleasure he gave; he loved all the 'world, and he fancied all the world 'loved him.

'As his fortune was but small, he 'lived up to the very extent of it; he 'had no intentions of leaving his children money, for that was dross; he 'was resolved they should have learning; for learning, he used to observe, 'was better than silver or gold. For 'this purpose he undertook to instruct 'us himself; and took as much pains 'to form our morals, as to improve our 'understanding. We were told that 'universal benevolence was what first 'cemented society; we were taught to 'consider all the wants of mankind as

'our

'our own; to regard the "human face "divine" with affection and esteem; 'he wound us up to be mere machines 'of pity, and rendered us incapable of 'withstanding the slightest impulse made 'either by real or fictitious distress; in a 'word, we were perfectly instructed in 'the art of *giving away* thousands be-'fore we were taught the more necessary 'qualifications of *getting* a farthing.

'I cannot avoid imagining, that thus 'refined by his lessons out of all my 'suspicion, and divested of even all the 'little cunning which Nature had given 'me, I resembled, upon my first entrance 'into the busy and insidious world, one 'of those gladiators who were exposed 'with armour in the amphitheatre at 'Rome. My father, however, who 'had only seen the world on one side, 'seemed to triumph in my superior dis-'cernment; though my whole stock of 'wisdom consisted in being able to talk 'like himself upon subjects that once 'were useful, because they were then 'topics of the busy world; but that now 'were utterly useless, because connect-'ed with the busy world no longer.

'The first opportunity he had of find-'ing his expectations disappointed, was 'at the very middling figure I made in 'the university; he had flattered himself 'that he should soon see me rising into 'the foremost rank in literary reputa-'tion, but was mortified to find me ut-'terly unnoticed and unknown. His 'disappointment might have been part-'ly ascribed to his having over-rated 'my talents, and partly to my dislike 'of mathematical reasonings at a time 'when my imagination and memory, 'yet unsatisfied, were more eager after 'new objects, than desirous of reason-'ing upon those I knew. This did 'not, however, please my tutors, who 'observed, indeed, that I was a little 'dull; but at the same time allowed, 'that I seemed to be very "good-na-"tured," and had no harm in me.

'After I had resided at college seven 'years, my father died, and left me— 'his blessing. Thus shoved from shore 'without ill-nature to protect, or cun-'ning to guide, or proper stores to sub-'sist me in so dangerous a voyage, I 'was obliged to embark in the wide 'world at twenty-two. But, in order 'to settle in life, my friends *advised* '(for they always advise when they 'begin to despise us) they advised me, 'I say, to go into orders.

'To be obliged to wear a long wig, 'when I liked a short one, or a black 'coat, when I generally dressed in brown, 'I thought was such a restraint upon 'my liberty, that I absolutely rejected 'the proposal. A priest in England 'is not the same mortified creature with 'a bonze in China; with us, not he that 'fasts best, but eats best, is reckoned 'the best liver; yet I rejected a life of 'luxury, indolence, and ease, from no 'other consideration but that boyish one 'of dress. So that my friends were 'now perfectly satisfied I was undone; 'and yet they thought it a pity for one 'who had not the least harm in him, 'and was so very good natured.

'Poverty naturally begets depend-'ance, and I was admitted as flatterer 'to a great man. At first I was sur-'prized, that the situation of a flatterer 'at a great man's table could be thought 'disagreeable; there was no great trou-'ble in listening attentively when his 'lordship spoke, and laughing when he 'looked round for applause. This even 'good-manners might have obliged me 'to perform. I found, however, too 'soon, that his lordship was a greater 'dunce than myself; and from that very 'moment flattery was at an end. I 'now rather aimed at setting him right, 'than at receiving his absurdities with 'submission: to flatter those we do not 'know is an easy task; but to flatter 'our intimate acquaintances, all whose 'foibles are strongly in our eye, is 'drudgery insupportable. Every time 'I now opened my lips in praise, my 'falshood went to my conscience; his 'lordship soon perceived me to be very 'unfit for service; I was therefore dis-'charged: my patron at the same time 'being graciously pleased to observe, 'that he believed I was tolerably good-'natured, and had not the least harm in 'me.

'Disappointed in ambition, I had re-'course to love. A young lady, who 'lived with her aunt, and was posses-'sed of a pretty fortune in her own dispo-'sal, had given me, as I fancied some 'reason to expect success. The symp-'toms by which I was guided were strik-'ing; she had always laughed with me at 'her aukward acquaintance, and at her 'aunt among the number; she always

'observed,

'observed, that a man of ſenſe would 'make a better huſband than a fool, 'and I as conſtantly applied the obſer- 'vation in my own favour. She con- 'tinually talked in my company of 'friendſhip and the beauties of the 'mind, and ſpoke of Mr. Shrimp, my 'rival's high-heel'd ſhoes, with deteſta- 'tion. Theſe were circumſtances which 'I thought ſtrongly in my favour; ſo 'after reſolving, and re-reſolving, I 'had courage enough to tell her my 'mind. Miſs heard my propoſal with 'ſerenity, ſeeming at the ſame time to 'ſtudy the figures of her fan. Out at 'laſt it came. There was but one ſmall 'objection to complete our happineſs, 'which was no more, than—that ſhe 'was married three months before to 'Mr. Shrimp, with high-heel'd ſhoes! 'By way of conſolation, however, ſhe 'obſerved, that though I was diſap- 'pointed in her, my addreſſes to her 'aunt would probably kindle her into 'ſenſibility; as the old lady always al- 'lowed me to be very good-natured, 'and not to have the leaſt ſhare of harm 'in me.

'Yet ſtill I had friends, numerous 'friends, and to them I was reſolved 'to apply. O friendſhip! thou fond 'ſoother of the human breaſt, to thee 'we fly in every calamity; to thee the 'wretched ſeek for ſuccour; on thee the 'care-tired ſon of miſery fondly relies; 'from thy kind aſſiſtance the unfortu- 'nate always hopes relief, and may be 'ever ſure of—diſappointment! My 'firſt application was to a city ſcrive- 'ner, who had frequently offered to 'lend me money when he knew I did 'not want it. I informed him, that 'now was the time to put his friendſhip 'to the teſt; that I wanted to borrow a 'couple of hundreds for a certain occa- 'ſion, and was reſolved to take it up 'from him. "And pray, Sir," cried 'my friend, "do you want all this "money?"—"Indeed I never wanted "it more," returned I. "I am ſorry "for that," cries the ſcrivener, "with "all my heart; for they who want mo- "ney when they come to borrow, will "always want money when they ſhould "come to pay."

'From him I flew with indignation 'to one of the beſt friends I had in the 'world, and made the ſame requeſt. "Indeed, Mr. Dry-bone," cries my 'friend, "I always thought it would "come to this. You know, Sir, I "would not adviſe you but for your "own good; but your conduct has hi- "therto been ridiculous in the higheſt "degree, and ſome of your acquaint- "ance always thought you a very ſilly "fellow. Let me ſee, you want two "hundred pounds; do you only want "two hundred, Sir, exactly?"—"To "confeſs a truth," returned I, "I ſhall "want three hundred; but then I "have another friend from whom I can "borrow the reſt."—"Why, then," 'replied my friend, "if you would "take my advice; and you know I "ſhould not preſume to adviſe you but "for your own good, I would recom- "mend it to you to borrow the whole "ſum from that other friend; and then "one note will ſerve for all, you "know."

'Poverty now began to come faſt 'upon me, yet inſtead of growing more 'provident or cautious as I grew poor, 'I became every day more indolent and 'ſimple. A friend was arreſted for 'fifty pounds, I was unable to extri- 'cate him except by becoming his bail. 'When at liberty he fled from his cre- 'ditors, and left me to take his place. 'In priſon I expected greater ſatisfac- 'tions than I had enjoyed at large. I 'hoped to converſe with men in this new 'world ſimple and believing like my- 'ſelf, but I found them as cunning and 'as cautious as thoſe in the world I had 'left behind. They ſpunged up my 'money whilſt it laſted, borrowed my 'coals and never paid them, and cheat- 'ed me when I played at cribbage. All 'this was done becauſe they believed 'me to be very good-natured, and 'knew that I had no harm in me.

'Upon my firſt entrance into this 'manſion, which is to ſome the abode 'of deſpair, I felt no ſenſations dif- 'ferent from thoſe I experienced abroad. 'I was now on one ſide the door, and 'thoſe who were unconfined were on 'the other; this was all the difference 'between us. At firſt indeed I felt 'ſome uneaſineſs, in conſidering how I 'ſhould be able to provide this week 'for the wants of the week enſuing; 'but after ſome time, if I found my- 'ſelf ſure of eating one day, I never 'troubled my head how I was to be 'ſupplied another. I ſeized every pre-

'carious

'carious meal with the utmost good 'humour, indulged no rants of spleen 'at my situation, never called down 'heaven and all the stars to behold me 'dining upon an half-penny-worth of 'radishes; my very companions were 'taught to believe that I liked sallad 'better than mutton. I contented my-'self with thinking, that all my life I 'should either eat white bread or brown; 'considered that all that happened was 'best, laughed when I was not in pain, 'took the world as it went, and read 'Tacitus often, for want of more books 'and company.

'How long I might have continued 'in this torpid state of simplicity I can-'not tell, had I not been rouzed by 'seeing an old acquaintance, whom I 'knew to be a prudent blockhead, pre-'ferred to a place in the government. I 'now found that I had pursued a wrong 'track, and that the true way of being 'able to relieve others, was first to aim 'at independence myself. My imme-'diate care, therefore, was to leave my 'present habitation, and make an en-'tire reformation in my conduct and 'behaviour. For a free, open, unde-'signing deportment, I put on that of 'closeness, prudence, and œconomy. 'One of the most heroic actions I ever 'performed, and for which I shall praise 'myself as long as I live, was the re-'fusing half a crown to an old ac-'quaintance, at the time when he want-'ed it, and I had it to spare; for this 'alone I deserve to be decreed an ova-'tion.

'I now therefore pursued a course of 'uninterrupted frugality, seldom want-'ed a dinner, and was consequently in-'vited to twenty. I soon began to get 'the character of a saving hunks that 'had money; and insensibly grew into 'esteem. Neighbours have asked my 'advice in the disposal of their daugh-'ters, and I have always taken care 'not to give any. I have contracted a 'friendship with an alderman, only by 'observing, that if we take a farthing 'from a thousand pound, it will be a 'thousand pound no longer. I have 'been invited to a pawnbroker's table, 'by pretending to hate gravy; and am 'now actually upon treaty of marriage 'with a rich widow, for only having 'observed that the bread was rising. If 'ever I am asked a question, whether 'I know it or not, instead of answering, 'I only smile and look wise. If a cha-'rity is proposed, I go about with the 'hat, but put nothing in myself. If 'a wretch solicits my pity, I observe 'that the world is filled with impostors, 'and take a certain method of not be-'ing deceived by never relieving. In 'short, I now find the truest way of 'finding esteem even from the indigent, 'is "to give away nothing, and thus "have much in our power to give."

LETTER XXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

LATELY, in company with my friend in black, whose conversation is now both my amusement and instruction, I could not avoid observing the great numbers of old bachelors and maiden ladies with which this city seems to be over-run. 'Sure marriage,' said I, 'is not sufficiently encouraged, or we 'should never behold such crowds of 'battered beaux and decayed coquets 'still attempting to drive a trade they 'have been so long unfit for, and swarm-'ing upon the gaiety of the age. I be-'hold an old bachelor in the most con-'temptible light, as an animal that lives 'upon the common stock without con-'tributing his share: he is a beast of 'prey, and the laws should make use of 'as many stratagems, and as much 'force to drive the reluctant savage into 'the toils, as the Indians when they 'hunt the rhinoceros. The mob should 'be permitted to halloo after him, boys 'might play tricks on him with impu-'nity, every well-bred company should 'laugh at him, and if, when turned of 'sixty, he offered to make love, his mis-'tress might spit in his face, or, what 'would be perhaps a greater punish-'ment, should fairly grant the favour.

'As for old maids,' continued I, 'they should not be treated with so 'much

much ſeverity, becauſe I ſuppoſe none would be ſo if they could. No lady in her ſenſes would chuſe to make a ſubordinate figure at chriſtenings and lyings-in, when ſhe might be the principal herſelf; nor curry favour with a ſiſter-in-law, when ſhe might command an huſband; nor toil in preparing cuſtards, when ſhe might lie a-bed and give directions how they ought to be made; nor ſtifle all her ſenſations in demure formality, when ſhe might with matrimonial freedom ſhake her acquaintance by the hand, and wink at a double entendre. No lady could be ſo very ſilly as to live ſingle, if ſhe could help it. I conſider an unmarried lady declining into the vale of years, as one of thoſe charming countries bordering on China that lies waſte for want of proper inhabitants. We are not to accuſe the country, but the ignorance of it's neighbours, who are inſenſible of it's beauties, though at liberty to enter and cultivate the ſoil.'

'Indeed, Sir,' replied my companion, 'you are very little acquainted with the Engliſh ladies, to think they are old maids againſt their will. I dare venture to affirm that you can hardly ſelect one of them all, but has had frequent offers of marriage, which, either pride or avarice has not made her reject. Inſtead of thinking it a diſgrace, they take every occaſion to boaſt of their former cruelty; a ſoldier does not exult more when he counts over the wounds he has received, than a female veteran when ſhe relates the wounds ſhe has formerly given: exhauſtleſs when ſhe begins a narrative of the former death-dealing power of her eyes. She tells of the knight in gold lace, who died with a ſingle frown, and never roſe again till—he was married to his maid: of the ſquire, who being cruelly denied, in a rage, flew to the window, and lifting up the ſaſh, threw himſelf in an agony—into his arm chair: of the parſon, who, croſſed in love, reſolutely ſwallowed opium, which baniſhed the ſtings of deſpiſed love by—making him ſleep. In ſhort, ſhe talks over her former loſſes with pleaſure; and, like ſome tradeſman, finds conſolation in the many bankruptcies ſhe has ſuffered.

'For this reaſon, whenever I ſee a ſuperannuated beauty ſtill unmarried, I tacitly accuſe her either of pride, avarice, coquetry, or affectation. There's Miſs Jenny Tinderbox, I once remember her to have had ſome beauty, and a moderate fortune. Her eldeſt ſiſter happened to marry a man of quality, and this ſeemed as a ſtatute of virginity againſt poor Jane. Becauſe there was one lucky hit in the family, ſhe was reſolved not to diſgrace it by introducing a tradeſman; by thus rejecting her equals, and neglected or deſpiſed by her ſuperiors, ſhe now acts in the capacity of tutoreſs to her ſiſter's children, and undergoes the drudgery of three ſervants, without receiving the wages of one.

'Miſs Squeeze was a pawnbroker's daughter; her father had early taught her that money was a very good thing, and left her a moderate fortune at his death. She was ſo perfectly ſenſible of the value of what ſhe had got, that ſhe was reſolved never to part with a farthing without an equality on the part of her ſuitor; ſhe thus refuſed ſeveral offers made her by people who wanted to better themſelves, as the ſaying is; and grew old and ill-natured, without ever conſidering that ſhe ſhould have made an abatement in her pretenſions, from her face being pale, and marked with the ſmall-pox.

'Lady Betty Tempeſt on the contrary had beauty, with fortune and family. But, fond of conqueſt, ſhe paſſed from triumph to triumph; ſhe had read plays and romances, and there had learned that a plain man of common ſenſe was no better than a fool; ſuch ſhe refuſed, and ſighed only for the gay, giddy, inconſtant, and thoughtleſs. After ſhe had thus rejected hundreds who liked her, and ſighed for hundreds who deſpiſed her, ſhe found herſelf inſenſibly deſerted: at preſent ſhe is company only for her aunts and couſins, and ſometimes makes one in a country-dance, with only one of the chairs for a partner, caſts off round a joint-ſtool, and ſets to a corner cupboard. In a word, ſhe is treated with civil contempt from every quarter, and placed, like a piece of old-faſhioned lumber, merely to fill up a corner.

'But Sophronia, the ſagacious Sophronia! how ſhall I mention her? She was taught to love Greek, and hate the men from her very infancy: ſhe has

'has rejected fine gentlemen because 'they were not pedants, and pedants 'because they were not fine gentlemen; 'her exquisite sensibility has taught her 'to discover every fault in every lover, 'and her inflexible justice has prevented 'her pardoning them: thus she rejected 'several offers, till the wrinkles of age 'had overtaken her; and now, without 'one good feature in her face, she talks 'incessantly of the beauties of the mind.' Farewell.

LETTER XXIX.

FROM THE SAME.

WERE we to estimate the learning of the English by the number of books that are every day published among them, perhaps no country, not even China itself, could equal them in this particular. I have reckoned not less than twenty-three new books published in one day; which upon computation makes eight thousand three hundred and ninety-five in one year. Most of these are not confined to one single science, but embrace the whole circle. History, politics, poetry, mathematics, metaphysics, and the philosophy of nature, are all comprized in a manual not larger than that in which our children are taught the letters. If then we suppose the learned of England to read but an eighth part of the works which daily come from the press, (and sure none can pretend to learning upon less easy terms) at this rate every scholar will read a thousand books in one year. From such a calculation you may conjecture what an amazing fund of literature a man must be possessed of, who thus reads three new books every day, not one of which but contains all the good things that ever were said or written.

And yet I know not how it happens, but the English are not in reality so learned as would seem from this calculation. We meet but few who know all arts and sciences to perfection; whether it is that the generality are incapable of such extensive knowledge, or that the authors of those books are not adequate instructors. In China, the emperor himself takes cognizance of all the doctors in the kingdom who profess authorship. In England, every man may be an author that can write; for they have by law a liberty not only of saying what they please, but of being also as dull as they please.

Yesterday I testified my surprize to the man in black, where writers could be found in sufficient number to throw off the books I daily saw crouding from the press. I at first imagined that their learned seminaries might take this method of instructing the world. But to obviate this objection, my companion assured me, that the doctors of colleges never wrote, and that some of them had actually forgot their reading—'But if 'you desire,' continued he, 'to see 'a collection of authors, I fancy I can 'introduce you this evening to a club, 'which assembles every Saturday at 'seven, at the sign of the Broom near 'Islington, to talk over the business of 'the last, and the entertainment of the 'week ensuing.' I accepted his invitation, we walked together, and entered the house some time before the usual hour for the company assembling.

My friend took this opportunity of letting me into the characters of the principal members of the club; not even the host excepted, who, it seems, was once an author himself, but preferred by a bookseller to this situation as a reward for his former services.

'The first person,' said he, 'of our 'society, is Doctor Nonentity, a metaphysician. Most people think him a 'profound scholar; but as he seldom 'speaks, I cannot be positive in that 'particular; he generally spreads himself before the fire, sucks his pipe, 'talks little, drinks much, and is reckoned very good company. I'm told 'he writes indexes to perfection, he 'makes essays on the origin of evil, philosophical enquiries upon any subject, 'and draws up an answer to any book 'upon twenty-four hours warning. 'You may distinguish him from the 'rest of the company by his long grey 'wig, and the blue handkerchief round 'his neck.

'The next to him in merit and esteem 'is Tim Syllabub, a droll creature; he

'sometimes shines as a star of the first 'magnitude among the choice spirits of 'the age; he is reckoned equally ex-'cellent at a rebus, a riddle, a bawdy 'song, and an hymn for the Tabernacle. 'You will know him by his shabby 'finery, his powdered wig, dirty shirt, 'and broken silk stockings.

'After him succeeds Mr. Tibbs, a 'very *useful hand*; he writes receipts 'for the bite of a mad dog, and throws 'off an eastern tale to perfection; he 'understands the *business* of an author 'as well as any man, for no bookseller 'alive can cheat him. You may distin-'guish him by the peculiar clumsiness 'of his figure and the coarseness of his 'coat: however, though it be coarse, '(as he frequently tells the company) 'he has paid for it.

'Lawyer Squint is the politician of 'the society; he makes speeches for par-'liament, writes addresses to his fel-'low-subjects, and letters to noble com-'manders; he gives the history of every 'new play, and finds *seasonable thoughts* 'upon every occasion.' My compa-nion was proceeding in his description, when the host came running in with ter-ror on his countenance to tell us, that the door was beset with bailiffs. 'If that 'be the case, then,' says my companion, 'we had as good be going; for I am 'positive we shall not see one of the 'company this night.' Wherefore, dis-appointed, we were both obliged to re-turn home, he to enjoy the oddities which compose his character alone, and I to write as usual to my friend the occur-rences of the day. Adieu.

LETTER XXX.

FROM THE SAME.

By my last advices from Moscow, I find the caravan has not yet de-parted from China: I still continue to write, expecting that you may receive a large number of my letters at once. In them you will find rather a minute de-tail of English peculiarities, than a ge-neral picture of their manners or dispo-sition. Happy it were for mankind if all travellers would thus, instead of charac-terising a people in general terms, lead us into a detail of those minute circum-stances which first influenced their opi-nion. The genius of a country should be investigated with a kind of experimental enquiry: by this means we should have more precise and just notions of foreign nations, and detect travellers themselves when they happened to form wrong con-clusions.

My friend and I repeated our visit to the club of authors; where, upon our entrance, we found the members all as-sembled and engaged in a loud debate.

The poet, in shabby finery, holding a manuscript in his hand, was earnestly endeavouring to persuade the company to hear him read the first book of an heroic poem, which he had composed the day before. But against this all the mem-bers very warmly objected. They knew no reason why any member of the club should be indulged with a particular hearing, when many of them had pub-lished whole volumes which had never been looked in. They insisted that the law should be observed, where reading in company was expressly noticed. It was in vain that the plaintiff pleaded the peculiar merit of his piece: he spoke to an assembly insensible to all his remon-strances; the book of laws was opened, and read by the secretary, where it was expressly enacted, 'That whatsoever 'poet, speech-maker, critic, or histo-'rian, should presume to engage the 'company by reading his own works, 'he was to lay down sixpence previous 'to opening the manuscript, and should 'be charged one shilling an hour while 'he continued reading; the said shilling 'to be equally distributed among the 'company as a recompence for their 'trouble.'

Our poet seemed at first to shrink at the penalty, hesitating for some time whether he should deposit the fine, or shut up the poem; but looking round, and perceiving two strangers in the room, his love of fame out-weighed his pru-dence, and laying down the sum by law established, he insisted on his prero-gative.

A profound silence ensuing, he began by explaining his design. 'Gentlemen,' says he, 'the present piece is not one of 'your

'your common epic poems, which come 'from the press like paper kites in summer; there are none of your Turnus's 'or Dido's in it; it is an heroical description of nature. I only beg you'll 'endeavour to make your souls unison 'with mine, and hear with the same 'enthusiasm with which I have written. 'The poem begins with the description 'of an author's bedchamber: the picture was sketched in my own apartment; for you must know, gentlemen, that I am myself the hero.' Then putting himself into the attitude of an orator, with all the emphasis of voice and action, he proceeded—

Where the Red Lion flaring o'er the way,
Invites each passing stranger that can pay;
Where Calvert's butt, and Parson's black champaign,
Regale the dra s and bloods of Drury Lane;
There in a lonely room, from bailiffs snug,
The muse found Scroggen stretch'd beneath a rug;
A window, patch'd with paper, lent a ray,
That dimly shew'd the state in which he lay:
The sanded floor that grits b neath the tread;
The humid wall with paltry pictures spread:
The royal game of goose was there in view,
And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew;
The seasons fram d with listi g found a place,
And brave Prince William shew d his lamp-black face:
The morn was cold, he views with keen desire
The rusty gate unconscious of a fire;
With beer and milk arrears the frieze was scor d,
And five crack'd tea-cups dress'd the chimney board;
A night-cap deck d his brows instead of bay,
A cap by night—a stocking all the day!

With this line he seemed so much elated, that he was unable to proceed: 'There, gentlemen,' cries he, 'th re 'is a description for you! Rabelais's 'bed-chamber is but a fool to it.

'A cap by night—a stocking all the day!'

'There is sound, and sense, and truth, 'and nature, in the trifling compass of 'ten little syllables.'

He was too much employed in self-admiration to observe the company; who by nods, winks, shrugs, and stifled laughter, testified every mark of contempt. He turned severally to each for their opinion, and found all, however, ready to applaud. One swore it was inimitable; another said it was damn'd fine; and a third cried out in a rapture—'Carissimo!' At last, addressing himself to the president—'And pray, Mr. 'Squint,' says he, 'let us have your 'opinion.'—'Mine!' answered the president, taking the manuscript out of the author's hands; 'may this glass 'suffocate me, but I think it equal to 'any thing I have seen; and I fancy,' continued he, doubling up the poem, and forcing it into the author's pocket, 'that you will get great honour when 'it comes out; so I shall beg leave to 'put it in. We will not intrude upon 'your good-nature, in desiring to hear 'more of it at present; *ex ungue Herculem*, we are satisfied, perfectly satisfied.' The author made two or three attempts to pull it out a second time, and the president made as many to prevent him. Thus, though with reluctance, he was at last obliged to sit down, contented with the commendations for which he had paid.

When this tempest of poetry and praise was blown over, one of the company changed the subject, by wondering how any man can be so dull as to write poetry at present, since prose itself would hardly pay. 'Would you think it, 'gentlemen,' continued he, 'I have 'actually written last week sixteen 'prayers, twelve bawdy jests, and three 'sermons, all at the rate of six-pence a 'piece; and what is still more extraordinary, the bookseller has lost by the 'bargain. Such sermons would once 'have gained me a prebend's stall; but 'now, alas! we have neither piety, 'taste, nor humour, among us. Positively, if this season does not turn out 'better than it has begun, unless the 'ministry commit some blunders to furnish us with a new topic of abuse; I 'shall resume my old business of working at the press, instead of finding it 'employment.'

The whole club seemed to join in condemning the season, as one of the worst that had come for some time. A gentleman particularly observed, that the nobility were never known to subscribe worse than at present. 'I know not 'how it happens,' said he; 'though I 'follow them up as close as possible, yet 'I can hardly get a single subscription 'in a week. The houses of the great 'are as inaccessible as a frontier garrison at midnight. I never see a nobleman's door half opened, that some

'surly porter or footman does not stand 'full in the breach. I was yesterday 'to wait with a subscription-proposal 'upon my Lord Squash the Creolin: 'I had posted myself at his door the 'whole morning, and just as he was 'getting into his coach, thrust my pro-'posal snug into his hand, folded up in 'the form of a letter from myself. He 'just glanced at the superscription, and, 'not knowing the hand, consigned it 'to his valet de chambre. This respect-'able personage treated it as his master, 'and put it into the hands of the por-'ter. The porter grasped my proposal, 'frowning; and, measuring my figure 'from top to toe, put it back into my 'own hands unopened.'

'To the devil I pitch all the nobility,' cries a little man, in a peculiar accent; 'I am sure they have of late used me 'most scurvily. You must know, gen-'tlemen, some time ago, upon the ar-'rival of a certain noble duke from his 'travels, I set myself down, and vamp-'ed up a fine flaunting, poetical pa-'negyric, which I had written in such 'a strain, that I fancied it would have 'even wheedled milk from a mouse. In 'this I represented the whole kingdom 'welcoming his grace to his native soil, 'not forgetting the loss France and 'Italy would sustain in their arts by his 'departure. I expected to touch for a 'bank bill at least; so, folding up my 'verses in gilt paper, I gave my last 'half crown to a genteel servant to be 'the bearer. My letter was safely 'conveyed to his grace; and the ser-'vant, after four hours absence, dur-'ing which time I led the life of a fiend, 'returned with a letter four times as big 'as mine. Guess my extasy at the pro-'spect of so fine a return! I eagerly 'took the pacquet into my hands, that 'trembled to receive it. I kept it some 'time unopened before me, brooding 'over the expected treasure it contained; 'when, opening it, as I hope to be sav-'ed, gentlemen, his grace had sent me 'in payment for my poem no Bank 'bills, but six copies of verse, each 'longer than mine, addressed to him 'upon the same occasion.'

'A nobleman,' cries a member, who had hitherto been silent, 'is created as 'much for the confusion of us authors 'as the catch-pole. I'll tell you a 'story, gentlemen, which is as true as 'that this pipe is made of clay. When 'I was delivered of my first book, I 'owed my taylor for a suit of cloaths; 'but that is nothing new, you know, 'and may be any man's case as well as 'mine. Well, owing him for a suit 'of cloaths, and hearing that my book 'took very well, he sent for his money, 'and insisted upon being paid imme-'diately: though I was at that time 'rich in fame, for my book run like 'wild-fire, yet I was very short in mo-'ney; and being unable to satisfy his 'demand, prudently resolved to keep 'my chamber, preferring a prison of 'my own chusing at home, to one of 'my taylor's chusing abroad. In vain 'the bailiffs used all their arts to decoy 'me from my citadel; in vain they sent 'to let me know that a gentleman want-'ed to speak with me at the next tavern; 'in vain they came with an urgent mes-'sage from my aunt in the country; in 'vain I was told that a particular friend 'was at the point of death, and desired 'to take his last farewell; I was deaf, 'insensible, rock, adamant; the bailiffs 'could make no impression on my hard 'heart, for I effectually kept my liberty 'by never stirring out of the room.

'This was very well for a fortnight; 'when one morning I received a most 'splendid message from the Earl of 'Doomsday, importing that he had 'read my book, and was in raptures 'with every line of it; he impatiently 'longed to see the author, and had some 'designs which might turn out greatly 'to my advantage. I paused upon the 'contents of this message, and found 'there could be no deceit, for the card 'was gilt at the edges, and the bearer, 'I was told, had quite the looks of a 'gentleman. Witness, ye powers, how 'my heart triumphed at my own im-'portance! I saw a long perspective of 'felicity before me, I applauded the 'taste of the times, which never saw 'genius forsaken; I had prepared a set 'introductory speech for the occasion, 'five glaring compliments for his lord-'ship, and two more modest for myself. 'The next morning, therefore, in or-'der to be punctual to my appointment, 'I took coach, and ordered the fellow 'to drive to the street and house men-'tioned in his lordship's address. I 'had the precaution to pull up the win-'dows as I went along to keep off the 'busy part of mankind; and, big with 'expectation, fancied the coach never

'went

'went faſt enough. At length, however, the wiſhed-for moment of it's 'ſtopping arrived; this for ſome time I 'impatiently expected; and, letting 'down the door in a tranſport, in order 'to take a previous view of his lordſhip's magnificent palace and ſituation, 'I found poiſon to my ſight! I found 'myſelf, not in an elegant ſtreet, but 'a paltry lane; not at a nobleman's 'door, but the door of a ſpunging-houſe; I found the coachman had all 'this while been juſt driving me to jail, 'and I ſaw the bailiff with a devil's 'face coming out to ſecure me.'

To a philoſopher, no circumſtance, however trifling, is too minute; he finds inſtruction and entertainment in occurrences, which are paſſed over by the reſt of mankind as low, trite, and indifferent; it is from the number of theſe particulars, which, to many, appear inſignificant, that he is at laſt enabled to form general concluſions; this, therefore, muſt be my excuſe for ſending ſo far as China, accounts of manners and follies, which, though minute in their own nature, ſerve more truly to characteriſe this people, than hiſtories of their public treaties, courts, miniſters, negociations, and ambaſſadors. Adieu.

LETTER XXXI.

FROM THE SAME.

THE Engliſh have not yet brought the art of gardening to the ſame perfection with the Chineſe, but have lately begun to imitate them. Nature is now followed with greater aſſiduity than formerly; the trees are ſuffered to ſhoot out into the utmoſt luxuriance; the ſtreams, no longer forced from their native beds, are permitted to wind along the vallies; ſpontaneous flowers take place of the finiſhed parterre, and the enamelled meadow of the ſhaven green.

Yet ſtill the Engliſh are far behind us in this charming art; their deſigners have not yet attained a power of uniting inſtruction with beauty. An European will ſcarcely conceive my meaning, when I ſay, that there is ſcarce a garden in China which does not contain ſome fine moral, couched under the general deſign, where one is not taught wiſdom as he walks, and feels the force of ſome noble truth, or delicate precept, reſulting from the diſpoſition of the groves, ſtreams, or grottoes. Permit me to illuſtrate what I mean by a deſcription of my gardens at Quamſi. My heart ſtill hovers round thoſe ſcenes of former happineſs with pleaſure; and I find a ſatiſfaction in enjoying them at this diſtance, though but in imagination.

You deſcended from the houſe between two groves of trees, planted in ſuch a manner, that they were impenetrable to the eye; while on each hand the way was adorned with all that was beautiful in porcelaine, ſtatuary, and painting. This paſſage from the houſe opened into an area ſurrounded with rocks, flowers, trees, and ſhrubs, but all ſo diſpoſed as if each was the ſpontaneous production of nature. As you proceeded forward on this lawn, to your right and left-hand were two gates, oppoſite each other, of very different architecture and deſign; and before you lay a temple, built rather with minute elegance than oſtentation.

The right-hand gate was planned with the utmoſt ſimplicity, or rather rudeneſs; ivy claſped round the pillars, the baleful cypreſs hung over it; time ſeemed to have deſtroyed all the ſmoothneſs and regularity of the ſtone: two champions with lifted clubs appeared in the act of guarding it's acceſs; dragons and ſerpents were ſeen in the moſt hideous attitudes, to deter the ſpectator from approaching; and the perſpective view that lay behind, ſeemed dark and gloomy to the laſt degree; the ſtranger was tempted to enter only from the motto— PERVIA VIRTUTI.

The oppoſite gate was formed in a very different manner; the architecture was light, elegant, and inviting; flowers hung in wreaths round the pillars; all was finiſhed in the moſt exact and maſterly manner; the very ſtone of which it was built, ſtill preſerved it's poliſh; nymphs, wrought by the hand of a maſter, in the moſt alluring attitudes, beckoned the ſtranger to approach; while all that lay behind, as far as the eye could

could reach, seemed gay, luxuriant, and capable of affording endless pleasure. The motto itself contributed to invite him; for over the gate was written these words—FACILIS DESCENSUS.

By this time, I fancy, you begin to perceive that the gloomy gate was designed to represent the road to Virtue; the opposite, the more agreeable passage to Vice. It is but natural to suppose, that the spectator was always tempted to enter by the gate which offered him so many allurements; I always in these cases left him to his choice; but generally found that he took to the left, which promised most entertainment.

Immediately upon his entering the gate of Vice, the trees and flowers were disposed in such a manner as to make the most pleasing impression; but as he walked farther on, he insensibly found the garden assume the air of a wilderness, the landskips began to darken, the paths grew more intricate, he appeared to go downwards, frightful rocks seemed to hang over his head, gloomy caverns, unexpected precipices, awful ruins, heaps of unburied bones, and terrifying sounds, caused by unseen waters, began to take place of what at first appeared so lovely; it was in vain to attempt returning, the labyrinth was too much perplexed for any but myself to find the way back. In short, when sufficiently impressed with the horrors of what he saw, and the imprudence of his choice, I brought him by an hidden door, a shorter way back into the area from whence at first he had strayed.

The gloomy gate now presented itself before the stranger; and though there seemed little in it's appearance to tempt his curiosity, yet encouraged by the motto, he generally proceeded. The darkness of the entrance, the frightful figures that seemed to obstruct his way, the trees of a mournful green, conspired at first to disgust him: as he went forward, however, all began to open and wear a more pleasing appearance; beautiful cascades, beds of flowers, trees loaded with fruit or blossoms, and unexpected brooks, improved the scene: he now found that he was ascending; and, as he proceeded, all nature grew more beautiful, the prospect widened as he went higher; even the air itself seemed to become more pure. Thus pleased, and happy from unexpected beauties, I at last led him to an arbour, from whence he could view the garden, and the whole country around, and where he might own, that the road to Virtue terminated in Happiness.

Though from this description you may imagine, that a vast tract of ground was necessary to exhibit such a pleasing variety in, yet be assured I have seen several gardens in England take up ten times the space which mine did, without half the beauty. A very small extent of ground is enough for an elegant taste; the greater room is required if magnificence is in view. There is no spot, though ever so little, which a skilful designer might not thus improve, so as to convey a delicate allegory, and impress the mind with truths the most useful and necessary. Adieu.

LETTER XXXII.

FROM THE SAME.

IN a late excursion with my friend into the country, a gentleman with a blue ribbon tied round his shoulder, and in a chariot drawn by six horses, passed swiftly by us, attended with a numerous train of captains, lacquies, and coaches filled with women. When we were recovered from the dust raised by this cavalcade, and could continue our discourse without danger of suffocation, I observed to my companion, that all this state and equipage which he seemed to despise, would in China be regarded with the utmost reverence, because such distinctions were always the reward of merit; the greatness of a Mandarine's retinue being a most certain mark of the superiority of his abilities or virtue.

'The gentleman who has now passed 'us,' replied my companion, 'has no 'claims from his own merit to distinc-'tion; he is possessed neither of abilities 'nor virtue; it is enough for him that 'one of his ancestors was possessed of 'these qualities two hundred years be-'fore

'fore him. There was a time, indeed, 'when his family deserved their title, 'but they are long since degenerated, 'and his ancestors for more than a cen- 'tury have been more solicitous to 'keep up the breed of their dogs and 'horses, than that of their children. 'This very nobleman, simple as he 'seems, is descended from a race of 'statesmen and heroes; but unluckily 'his great grandfather marrying a cook- 'maid, and she having a trifling pas- 'sion for his lordship's groom, they 'somehow cr ss'd the strain, and pro- 'duced an heir, who took after his mo- 'ther in his great love to *good eating*, 'and his father in a violent affection for '*horse flesh*. These passions have for 'some generations passed on from fa- 'ther to son, and are now become the 'characteristics of the family, his present 'lordship being equally remarkable for 'his kitchen and his table.'

'But such a nobleman,' cried I, 'deserves our pity, thus placed in so 'high a sphere of life, which only the 'more exposes to contempt. A king 'may confer titles, but it is personal 'merit alone that insures respect. I 'suppose,' added I, 'that such men 'are despised by their equals, neg- 'lected by their inferiors, and con- 'demned to live among involuntary de- 'pendants in irksome solitude.'

'You are still under a mistake,' replied my companion; 'for though this 'nobleman is a stranger to generosity; 'though he takes twenty opportunities 'in a day of letting his guests know 'how much he despises them; though 'he is possessed neither of taste, wit, nor 'wisdom; though incapable of improv- 'ing others by his conversation, and 'never known to enrich any by his 'bounty; yet for all this, his company 'is eagerly sought after: he is a lord, 'and that is as much as most people 'desire in a companion. Quality and 'title have such allurements, that hun- 'dreds are ready to give up all their own 'importance, to cringe, to flatter, to look 'little, and to pall every pleasure in con- 'straint, merely to be among the great, 'though without the least hopes of im- 'proving their understanding, or shar- 'ing their generosity; they might be 'happy among their equals, but those 'are despised for company, where they 'are despised in turn. You saw what 'a crowd of humble cousins, card-ruin- 'ed beaus, and captains on half-pay, 'were willing to make up this great 'man's retinue down to his country- 'seat. Not one of all these that could 'not lead a more comfortable life at 'home in their little lodging of three 'shillings a week, with their luke-warm 'dinner, served up between two pew- 'ter-plates from a cook's shop. Yet, 'poor devils, they are willing to un- 'dergo the impertinence and pride of 'their entertainer, merely to be thought 'to live among the great: they are wil- 'ling to pass the summer in bondage, 'though conscious they are taken down 'only to approve his lordship's taste 'upon every occasion, to tag all his stu- 'pid observations with a *very true*, to 'praise his table, and descant upon his 'claret and cookery.

'The pitiful humiliations of the gen- 'tlemen you are now describing,' said I, 'puts me in mind of a custom among 'the Tartars of Koreki, not entirely 'dissimilar to this we are now consider- 'ing*. The Russians, who trade with 'them, carry thither a kind of mush- 'rooms, which they exchange for furs 'of squirrels, ermines, sables, and foxes. 'These mushrooms the rich Tartars lay 'up in large quantities for the winter; 'and when a nobleman makes a mush- 'room feast, all the neighbours around 'are invited. The mushrooms are pre- 'pared by boiling, by which the water 'acquires an intoxicating quality, and 'is a sort of drink which the Tartars 'prize beyond all other. When the 'nobility and ladies are assembled, and 'the ceremonies usual between people 'of distinction over, the mushroom 'broth goes freely round; they laugh, 'talk double entendre, grow fuddled, 'and become excellent company. The 'poorer sort, who love mushroom broth 'to distraction as well as the rich, but 'cannot afford it at the first hand, post 'themselves on these occasions round 'the huts of the rich, and watch the 'opportunity of the ladies and gentlemen 'as they come down to pass their liquor, 'and holding a wooden bowl, catch 'the delicious fluid, very little altered 'by filtration, being still strongly tinc-

* Van Stralenberg, a writer of credit, gives the same account of this people. Vid. an Historico-Geographical Description of the North-eastern Parts of Europe and Asia, p. 397.

'tured

'tured with the intoxicating quality. 'Of this they drink with the utmost 'satisfaction, and thus they get as 'drunk and as jovial as their betters.'

'Happy nobility!' cries my companion, 'who can fear no diminution of 'respect, unless by being seized with a 'strangury; and who when most drunk 'are most useful: though we have not 'this custom among us, I foresee, that 'if it were introduced, we might have 'many a toad-eater in England ready 'to drink from the wooden bowl on 'these occasions, and to praise the flavour of his lordship's liquor. As we 'have different classes of gentry, who 'knows but we may see a lord holding 'the bowl to a minister, a knight holding it to his lordship, and a simple ''squire drinking it double distilled 'from the loins of knighthood! For 'my part, I shall never for the future hear 'a great man's flatterers haranguing 'in his praise, that I shall not fancy 'I behold the wooden bowl; for I can 'see no reason why a man, who can live 'easily and happily at home, should 'bear the drudgery of decorum and the 'impertinence of his entertainer, unless 'intoxicated with a passion for all that 'was quality; unless he thought that 'whatever came from the great was delicious, and had the tincture of the 'mushroom in it.' Adieu.

LETTER XXXIII.

FROM THE SAME.

I AM disgusted, O Fum Hoam, even to sickness disgusted. Is it possible to bear the presumption of those islanders, when they pretend to instruct me in the ceremonies of China! They lay it down as a maxim, that every person who comes from thence must express himself in metaphor; swear by Alla, rail against wine, and behave, and talk, and write, like a Turk or Persian. They make no distinction between our elegant manners, and the voluptuous barbarities of our eastern neighbours. Wherever I come, I raise either diffidence or astonishment: some fancy me no Chinese, because I am formed more like a man than a monster; and others wonder to find one born five thousand miles from England endued with common sense. 'Strange,' say they, 'that a man, who 'has received his education at such a 'distance from London, should have 'common sense! To be born out of England, and yet have common sense! 'impossible! He must be some Englishman in disguise; his very visage has 'nothing of the true exotic barbarity.'

I yesterday received an invitation from a lady of distinction, who it seems had collected all her knowledge of Eastern manners from fictions every day propagated here, under the titles of Eastern Tales and Oriental Histories: she received me very politely, but seemed to wonder that I neglected bringing opium and a tobacco-box. When chairs were drawn for the rest of the company, I was assigned my place on a cushion on the floor. It was in vain that I protested the Chinese used chairs as in Europe; she understood decorums too well to entertain me with the ordinary civilities.

I had scarce been seated according to her directions, when the footman was ordered to pin a napkin under my chin: this I protested against, as being no way Chinese; however, the whole company, who it seems were a club of connoisseurs, gave it unanimously against me, and the napkin was pinned accordingly.

It was impossible to be angry with people, who seemed to err only from an excess of politeness, and I sat contented, expecting their importunities were now at an end; but as soon as ever dinner was served, the lady demanded whether I was for a plate of *Bear's claws*, or a slice of *Birds-nests?* As these were dishes with which I was utterly unacquainted, I was desirous of eating only what I knew, and therefore begged to be helped from a piece of beef that lay on the side-table. My request at once disconcerted the whole company. A Chinese eat beef! that could never be! there was no local propriety in Chinese beef, whatever there might be in Chinese pheasant. 'Sir,' said my entertainer, 'I think I have some reasons to 'fancy myself a judge of these matters: 'in short, the Chinese never eat beef; 'so that I must be permitted to recom-

'mend

'mend the Pilaw, there was never better dressed at Pekin; the saffron and rice are well boiled, and the spices in perfection.'

I had no sooner begun to eat what was laid before me, than I found the whole company as much astonished as before; it seems I made no use of my chop-sticks. A grave gentleman, whom I take to be an author, harangued very learnedly (as the company seemed to think) upon the use which was made of them in China: he entered into a long argument with himself about their first introduction, without once appealing to me, who might be supposed best capable of silencing the enquiry. As the gentleman therefore took my silence for a mark of his own superior sagacity, he was resolved to pursue the triumph: he talked of our cities, mountains, and animals, as familiarly as if he had been born in Quamii, but as erroneously as if a native of the moon; he attempted to prove that I had nothing of the true Chinese cut in my visage; shewed that my cheek bones should have been higher, and my forehead broader; in short, he almost reasoned me out of my country, and effectually persuaded the rest of the company to be of his opinion.

I was going to expose his mistakes, when it was insisted that I had nothing of the true Eastern manner in my delivery. 'This gentleman's conversation,' says one of the ladies, who was a great reader, 'is like our own, mere chit-chat and common sense; there is nothing like sense in the true Eastern stile, where nothing more is required but sublimity. Oh for an history of Aboulfaouris, the grand voyager; of Genii, Magicians, Rocks, Bags of Bullets, Giants, and Enchanters, where all is great, obscure, magnificent, and unintelligible!'—'I have written many a sheet of Eastern tale myself,' interrupts the author; 'and I defy the severest critic to say but that I have stuck close to the true manner. I have compared a lady's chin to the snow upon the mountains of Bomek; a soldier's sword, to the clouds that obscure the face of heaven. If riches are mentioned, I compare them to the flocks that graze the verdant Teflis; if poverty, to the mists that veil the brow of Mount Baku. I have used *thee* and *thou* upon all occasions; I have described fallen stars, and splitting mountains, not forgetting the little Houries who make a pretty figure in every description. But you shall hear how I generally begin.—"Eben-ben-bolo, who was the son of Ban, was born on the foggy summits of Benderabassi. His beard was whiter than the feathers which veil the breast of the Penguin; his eyes were like the eyes of doves, when washed by the dews of the morning; his hair, which hung like the willow weeping over the glassy stream, was so beautiful that it seemed to reflect it's own brightness; and his feet were as the feet of a wild deer which fleeth to the tops of the mountains." There, there, is the true Eastern taste for you! every advance made towards sense, is only a deviation from sound. Eastern tales should always be sonorous, lofty, musical, and unmeaning.'

I could not avoid smiling, to hear a native of England attempt to instruct me in the true Eastern idiom; and after he looked round some time for applause, I presumed to ask him whether he had ever travelled into the East, to which he replied in the negative; I demanded whether he understood Chinese or Arabic, to which also he answered as before. 'Then how, Sir,' said I, 'can you pretend to determine upon the Eastern stile, who are entirely unacquainted with the Eastern writings? Take, Sir, the word of one who is *professedly* a Chinese, and who is *actually* acquainted with the Arabian writers, that what is palmed upon you daily for an imitation of Eastern writing, no ways resembles their manner, either in sentiment or diction. In the East, similes are seldom used, and metaphors almost wholly unknown; but in China particularly, the very reverse of what you allude to, takes place; a cool phlegmatic method of writing prevails there. The writers of that country, ever more assiduous to instruct than to please, address rather the judgment than the fancy. Unlike many authors of Europe, who have no consideration of the reader's time, they generally leave more to be understood than they express.

'Besides, Sir, you must not expect from an inhabitant of China the same ignorance, the same unlettered simplicity, that you find in a *Turk*, *Persian*, or native of *Peru*. The Chinese are

verſed in the ſciences as well as you, and are maſters of ſeveral arts unknown to the people of Europe. Many of them are inſtructed not only in their own national learning, but are perfectly well acquainted with the languages and learning of the Weſt. If my word, in ſuch a caſe, is not to be taken, conſult your own travellers on this head, who affirm, that the ſcholars of Pekin and Siam ſuſtain theological theſes in Latin—“ The college of Maſprend, which is but a league from Siam,” ſays one of your travellers *, “ came in a body to ſalute our ambaſſador. Nothing gave me more ſincere pleaſure than to behold a number of prieſts, venerable both from age and modeſty, followed by a number of youths of all nations, Chineſe, Japaneſe, Tonquineſe, of Cochin China, Pegu and Siam, all willing to pay their reſpects in the moſt polite manner imaginable. A Cochin Chineſe made an excellent Latin oration upon this occaſion: he was ſucceeded, and even out-done, by a ſtudent of Tonquin, who was as well ſkilled in the Weſtern learning as any ſcholar of Paris.” Now, Sir, if youths, who never ſtirred from home, are ſo perfectly ſkilled in your laws and learning, ſurely more muſt be expected from one like me, who have travelled ſo many thouſand miles, who have converſed familiarly for ſeveral years with the Engliſh factors eſtabliſhed at Canton, and the miſſionaries ſent us from every part of Europe. The unaffected of every country nearly reſemble each other, and a page of our Confucius and of your Tillotſon have ſcarce any material difference. Paltry affectation, ſtrained alluſions, and diſguſting finery, are eaſily attained by thoſe who chuſe to wear them; and they are but too frequently the badges of ignorance, or of ſtupidity, whenever it would endeavour to pleaſe.’

I was proceeding in my diſcourſe, when, looking round, I perceived the company no way attentive to what I attempted, with ſo much earneſtneſs, to enforce. One lady was whiſpering her that ſat next, another was ſtudying the merits of a fan, a third began to yawn, and the author himſelf fell faſt aſleep: I thought it, therefore, high time to make a retreat: nor did the company ſeem to ſhew any regret at my preparations for departure; even the lady who had invited me, with the moſt mortifying inſenſibility, ſaw me ſeize my hat, and riſe from my cuſhion; nor was I invited to repeat my viſit, becauſe it was found that I aimed at appearing rather a reaſonable creature, than an outlandiſh idiot. Adieu.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO THE SAME.

THE polite arts are in this country ſubject to as many revolutions as it's laws or politics; not only the objects of fancy and dreſs, but even of delicacy and taſte, are directed by the capricious influence of faſhion. I am told there has been a time when poetry was univerſally encouraged by the great, when men of the firſt rank not only patronized the poet, but produced the fineſt models for his imitation; it was then the Engliſh ſent forth thoſe glowing rhapſodies, which we have ſo often read over together with rapture; poems big with all the ſublimity of Mentius, and ſupported by reaſoning as ſtrong as that of Zimpo.

The nobility are fond of wiſdom, but they are alſo fond of having it without ſtudy; to read poetry required thought, and the Engliſh nobility were not fond of thinking; they ſoon therefore placed their affections upon muſic, becauſe in this they might indulge an happy vacancy, and yet ſtill have pretenſions to delicacy and taſte as before. They ſoon brought their numerous dependents into an approbation of their pleaſures; who in turn led their thouſand imitators to feel or feign a ſimili-

* Journal ou ſuite du Voyage de Siam en forme de Lettres familieres fuit en 1685, & 1686. par N. L. D. C. pag. 174. edit. Amſtelod. 1686.

tude

tude of paſſion. Colonies of ſingers were now imported from abroad at a vaſt expence, and it was expected the Engliſh would ſoon be able to ſet examples to Europe: all theſe expectations, however, were ſoon diſſipated; in ſpite of the zeal which fired the great, the ignorant vulgar refuſed to be taught to ſing; refuſed to undergo the ceremonies which were to initiate them in the ſinging fraternity. Thus the colony from abroad dwindled by degrees; for they were of themſelves unfortunately incapable of propagating the breed.

Muſic having thus loſt it's ſplendour, Painting is now become the ſole object of faſhionable care; the title of Connoiſſeur in that art is at preſent the ſafeſt paſſport in every faſhionable ſociety; a well-timed ſhrug, an admiring attitude, and one or two exotic tones of exclamation, are ſufficient qualifications for men of low circumſtances to curry favour; even ſome of the young nobility are themſelves early inſtructed in handling the pencil, while their happy parents, big with expectation, foreſee the walls of every apartment covered with the manufactures of their poſterity.

But many of the Engliſh are not content with giving all their time to this art at home; ſome young men of diſtinction are found to travel through Europe, with no other intent than that of underſtanding and collecting pictures; ſtudying ſeals, and deſcribing ſtatues: on they travel from this cabinet of curioſities to that gallery of pictures, waſte the prime of life in wonder, ſkilful in pictures, ignorant in men; yet impoſſible to be reclaimed, becauſe their follies take ſhelter under the names of Delicacy and Taſte.

It is true, Painting ſhould have due encouragement, as the painter can undoubtedly fit up our apartments in a much more elegant manner than the upholſterer; but I ſhould think a man of faſhion makes but an indifferent exchange, who lays out all that time in furniſhing his houſe which he ſhould have employed in the furniture of his head; a perſon who ſhews no other ſymptoms of taſte than his cabinet or gallery, might as well boaſt to me of the furniture of his kitchen.

I know no other motive but vanity that induces the great to teſtify ſuch an inordinate paſſion for pictures; after the piece is bought, and gazed at eight or ten days ſucceſſively, the purchaſer's pleaſure muſt ſurely be over; all the ſatisfaction he can then have, is to ſhew it to others: he may be conſidered as the guardian of a treaſure of which he makes no manner of uſe; his gallery is furniſhed not for himſelf, but the connoiſſeur, who is generally ſome humble flatterer, ready to feign a rapture he does not feel; and as neceſſary to the happineſs of a picture-buyer, as gazers are to the magnificence of an Aſiatic proceſſion.

I have incloſed a letter from a youth of diſtinction, on his travels, to his father in England; in which he appears addicted to no vice, ſeems obedient to his governor, of a good natural diſpoſition, and fond of improvement; but at the ſame time early taught to regard cabinets and galleries as the only proper ſchools of improvement, and to conſider a ſkill in pictures as the propereſt knowledge for a man of quality.

MY LORD,

WE have been but two days at Antwerp; wherefore I have ſat down as ſoon as poſſible to give you ſome account of what we have ſeen ſince our arrival, deſirous of letting no opportunity paſs without writing to ſo good a father. Immediately upon alighting from our Rotterdam machine, my governor, who is immoderately fond of paintings, and at the ſame time an excellent judge, would let no time paſs till we paid our reſpects to the church of the Virgin-Mother, which contains treaſure beyond eſtimation. We took an infinity of pains in knowing it's exact dimenſions, and differed half a foot in our calculation; ſo I leave that to ſome ſucceeding information. I really believe my governor and I could have lived and died there. There is ſcarce a pillar in the whole church that is not adorned by a Reubens, a Vander Meuylen, a Vandyke, or a Woverman. What attitudes, carnations, and draperies! I am almoſt induced to pity the Engliſh, who have none of thoſe exquiſite pieces among them. As we are willing to let ſlip no opportunity of doing buſineſs, we immediately after went to wait on Mr. Hogendorp, whom you have ſo frequently commended for his judicious collection. His cameas are indeed beyond

yond price; his intaglios not ſo good. He ſhewed us one of an officiating flamen, which he thought to be an antique; but my governor, who is not to be deceived in theſe particulars, ſoon found it to be an arrant *çinque cento*. I could not, however, ſufficiently admire the genius of Mr. Hogendorp, who has been able to collect from all parts of the world a thouſand things which nobody knows the uſe of. Except your lordſhip and my governor, I do not know any body I admire ſo much. He is indeed a ſurprizing genius. The next morning early, as we were reſolved to take the whole day before us, we ſent our compliments to Mr. Van Sprockken, deſiring to ſee his gallery, which requeſt he very politely complied with. His gallery meaſures fifty feet by twenty, and is well filled; but what ſurprized me moſt of all, was to ſee an Holy Family juſt like your lordſhip's, which this ingenious gentleman aſſures me is the true original. I own this gave me inexpreſſible uneaſineſs, and I fear it will to your lordſhip, as I had flattered myſelf that the only original was in your lordſhip's poſſeſſion; I would adviſe you, however, to take yours down till it's merit can be aſcertained, my governor aſſuring me, that he intends to write a long diſſertation to prove it's originality. One might ſtudy in this city for ages, and ſtill find ſomething new. We went from this to view the cardinal's ſtatues, which are really very fine; there were three ſpintria executed in a very maſterly manner, all arm in arm. The torſe which I heard you talk ſo much of, is at laſt diſcovered to be a Hercules ſpinning, and not a Cleopatra bathing, as your lordſhip had conjectured: there has been a treatiſe written to prove it.

My Lord Firmly is certainly a Goth, a Vandal, no taſte in the world for painting. I wonder how any call him a man of taſte. Paſſing through the ſtreets of Antwerp a few days ago, and obſerving the nakedneſs of the inhabitants, he was ſo barbarous as to obſerve, that he thought the beſt method the Flemings could take, was to ſell their pictures and buy cloaths. Ah, Cogline! we ſhall go to-morrow to Mr. Carwarden's cabinet, and the next day we ſhall ſee the curioſities collected by Van Ran, and the day after we ſhall pay a viſit to Mount Calvary, and after that—but I find my paper finiſhed; ſo with the moſt ſincere wiſhes to your lordſhip's happineſs, and with hopes, after having ſeen Italy, that centre of pleaſure, to return home worthy the care and expence which has been generouſly laid out in my improvement, I remain, my Lord,

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXXV.

FROM HINGPO, A SLAVE IN PERSIA, TO ALTANGI, A TRAVELLING PHILOSOPHER OF CHINA, BY THE WAY OF MOSCOW.

FORTUNE has made me the ſlave of another, but nature and inclination render me entirely ſubſervient to you; a tyrant commands my body, but you are maſter of my heart. And yet, let not thy inflexible nature condemn me, when I confeſs that I find my ſoul ſhrink with my circumſtances. I feel my mind, not leſs than my body, bend beneath the rigours of ſervitude; the maſter whom I ſerve grows every day more formidable. In ſpite of reaſon, which ſhould teach me to deſpiſe him, his hideous image fills even my dreams with horror.

A few days ago, a Chriſtian ſlave, who wrought in the gardens, happening to enter an arbour where the tyrant was entertaining the ladies of his Haram with coffee, the unhappy captive was inſtantly ſtabbed to the heart for his intruſion. I have been preferred to his place, which, though leſs laborious than my former ſtation, is yet more ungrateful, as it brings me nearer him whoſe preſence excites ſenſations at once of diſguſt and apprehenſion.

Into what a ſtate of miſery are the modern Perſians fallen! A nation famous for ſetting the world an example of freedom, is now become a land of tyrants, and a den of ſlaves. The houſeleſs Tartar of Kamkatſka, who enjoys his herbs and his fiſh in unmoleſted freedom, may be envied, if compared to the thouſands who pine here in hopeleſs ſervitude,

ſervitude, and curſe the day that gave them being. Is this juſt dealing, Heaven! to render millions wretched to ſwell up the happineſs of a few? Cannot the powerful of this earth be happy without our ſighs and tears? Muſt every luxury of the great be woven from the calamities of the poor? It muſt, it muſt ſurely be, that this jarring diſcordant life is but the prelude to ſome future harmony; the ſoul attuned to virtue here, ſhall go from hence to fill up the univerſal choir where Tien preſides in perſon, where there ſhall be no tyrants to frown, no ſhackles to bind, nor no whips to threaten; where I ſhall once more meet my father with rapture, and give a looſe to filial piety; where I ſhall hang on his neck, and hear the wiſdom of his lips, and thank him for all the happineſs to which he has introduced me.

The wretch whom Fortune has made my maſter, has lately purchaſed ſeveral ſlaves of both ſexes; among the reſt, I hear a Chriſtian captive talked of with admiration. The eunuch who bought her, and who is accuſtomed to ſurvey beauty with indifference, ſpeaks of her with emotion! Her pride, however, aſtoniſhes her attendant ſlaves not leſs than her beauty: it is reported that ſhe refuſes the warmeſt ſolicitations of her haughty lord; he has even offered to make her one of his four wives upon changing her religion, and conforming to his. It is probable ſhe cannot refuſe ſuch extraordinary offers, and her delay is perhaps intended to enhance her favours.

I have juſt now ſeen her; ſhe inadvertently approached the place without a veil, where I ſat writing. She ſeemed to regard the heavens alone with fixed attention: there her moſt ardent gaze was directed. Genius of the ſun! what unexpected ſoftneſs! what animated grace! her beauty ſeemed the tranſparent covering of virtue. Celeſtial beings could not wear a look of more perfection, while ſorrow humanized her form, and mixed my admiration with pity. I roſe from the bank on which I ſat, and ſhe retired; happy that none obſerved us, for ſuch an interview might have been fatal.

I have regarded, till now, the opulence and the power of my tyrant without envy; I ſaw him with a mind incapable of enjoying the gifts of fortune, and conſequently regarded him as one loaded, rather than enriched, with it's favours. But at preſent, when I think that ſo much beauty is reſerved only for him, that ſo many charms ſhall be laviſhed on a wretch incapable of feeling the greatneſs of the bleſſing, I own I feel a reluctance to which I have hitherto been a ſtranger.

But let not my father impute thoſe uneaſy ſenſations to ſo trifling a cauſe as love. No, never let it be thought that *your* ſon, and the pupil of the wiſe Fum Hoam, could ſtoop to ſo degrading a paſſion. I am only diſpleaſed at ſeeing ſo much excellence ſo unjuſtly diſpoſed of.

The uneaſineſs which I feel is not for myſelf, but for the beautiful Chriſtian. When I reflect on the barbarity of him for whom ſhe is deſigned, I pity, indeed I pity her. When I think that ſhe muſt only ſhare one heart, who deſerves to command a thouſand, excuſe me, if I feel an emotion, which univerſal benevolence extorts from me. As I am convinced that you take a pleaſure in thoſe ſallies of humanity, and are particularly pleaſed with compaſſion, I could not avoid diſcovering the ſenſibility with which I felt this beautiful ſtranger's diſtreſs. I have for a while forgot, in her's, the miſeries of my own hopeleſs ſituation. The tyrant grows every day more ſevere; and love, which ſoftens all other minds into tenderneſs, ſeems only to have encreaſed his ſeverity. Adieu.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

THE whole Haram is filled with a tumultuous joy; Zelis, the beautiful captive, has conſented to embrace the religion of Mahomet, and become one of the wives of the faſtidious Perſian. It is impoſſible to deſcribe the tranſport that ſits on every face on this occaſion. Muſic and feaſting fill every apartment; the moſt miſerable ſlave ſeems to forget his chains, and ſympathizes with the happineſs

happineſs of Moſtadad. The herb we tread beneath our feet is not made more for our uſe, than every ſlave around him for their imperious maſter; mere machines of obedience, they wait with ſilent aſſiduity, feel his pains, and rejoice in his exultation. Heavens! how much is requiſite to make one man happy!

Twelve of the moſt beautiful ſlaves, and I among the number, have got orders to prepare for carrying him in triumph to the bridal apartment. The blaze of perfumed torches are to imitate the day; the dancers and ſingers are hired at a vaſt expence. The nuptials are to be celebrated on the approaching feaſt of Barboura, when an hundred taels in gold are to be diſtributed among the barren wives, in order to pray for fertility from the approaching union.

What will not riches procure! An hundred domeſtics, who curſe the tyrant in their ſouls, are commanded to wear a face of joy, and they are joyful. An hundred flatterers are ordered to attend, and they fill his ears with praiſe. Beauty, all-commanding beauty, ſues for admittance, and ſcarcely receives an anſwer; even love itſelf ſeems to wait upon fortune, or though the paſſion be only feigned, yet it wears every appearance of ſincerity; and what greater pleaſure can even true ſincerity confer, or what would the rich have more?

Nothing can exceed the intended magnificence of the bridegroom, but the coſtly dreſſes of the bride; ſix eunuchs, in the moſt ſumptuous habits, are to conduct him to the nuptial couch, and wait his orders. Six ladies, in all the magnificence of Perſia, are directed to undreſs the bride. Their buſineſs is to aſſiſt to encourage her, to diveſt her of every encumbering part of her dreſs, all but the laſt covering, which, by an artful complication of ribbons, is purpoſely made difficult to unloose, and with which ſhe is to part reluctantly even to the joyful poſſeſſor of her beauty.

Moſtadad, O my father, is no philoſopher; and yet he ſeems perfectly contented with ignorance. Poſſeſſed of numberleſs ſlaves, camels, and women, he deſires no greater poſſeſſion. He never opened the page of Mentius, and yet all the ſlaves tell me that he is happy.

Forgive the weakneſs of my nature, if I ſometimes feel my heart rebellious to the dictates of wiſdom, and eager for happineſs like his. Yet, why wiſh for his wealth with his ignorance? to be like him, incapable of ſentimental pleaſures, incapable of feeling the happineſs of making others happy, incapable of teaching the beautiful Zelis philoſophy.

What, ſhall I in a tranſport of paſſion give up the golden mean, the univerſal harmony, the unchanging eſſence, for the poſſeſſion of an hundred camels, as many ſlaves, thirty-five beautiful horſes, and ſeventy-three fine women? Firſt blaſt me to the centre! Degrade me beneath the moſt degraded! Pare my nails, ye powers of heaven! ere I would ſtoop to ſuch an exchange. What, part with philoſophy, which teaches me to ſuppreſs my paſſions inſtead of gratifying them, which teaches me even to diveſt my ſoul of paſſion, which teaches ſerenity in the midſt of tortures; philoſophy, by which even now I am ſo very ſerene, and ſo very much at eaſe, to be perſuaded to part with it for any other enjoyment! Never, never, even though perſuaſion ſpoke in the accents of Zelis!

A female ſlave informs me that the bride is to be arrayed in a tiſſue of ſilver, and her hair adorned with the largeſt pearls of Ormus: but why teaze you with particulars, in which we both are ſo little concerned; the pain I feel in ſeparation throws a gloom over my mind, which in this ſcene of univerſal joy I fear may be attributed to ſome other cauſe. How wretched are thoſe who are, like me, denied even the laſt reſource of miſery, their tears!

Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER XXXVII.

FROM THE SAME.

I Begin to have doubts whether wisdom be alone sufficient to make us happy. Whether every step we make in refinement is not an inlet into new disquietudes. A mind too vigorous and active, serves only to consume the body to which it is joined, as the richest jewels are soonest found to wear their settings.

When we rise in knowledge, as the prospect widens, the objects of our regard become more obscure; and the unlettered peasant, whose views are only directed to the narrow sphere around him, beholds Nature with a finer relish, and tastes her blessings with a keener appetite, than the philosopher, whose mind attempts to grasp an universal system.

As I was some days ago pursuing this subject among a circle of my fellow slaves, an ancient Guebre of the number, equally remarkable for his piety and wisdom, seemed touched with my conversation, and desired to illustrate what I had been saying with an allegory taken from the Zendavesta of Zoroaster: 'By this we shall be taught,' says he, 'that they who travel in pursuit of wisdom, walk only in a circle; and after 'all their labour, at last return to their 'pristine ignorance; and in this also 'we shall see that enthusiastic confidence, or unsatisfying doubts, terminate all our enquiries.

'In early times, before myriads of 'nations covered the earth, the whole 'human race lived together in one valley. The simple inhabitants, surrounded on every side by lofty mountains, knew no other world but the 'little spot to which they were confined. 'They fancied the heavens bent down 'to meet the mountain tops, and formed an impenetrable wall to surround 'them. None had ever yet ventured to 'climb the steepy cliff, in order to explore those regions that lay beyond it; 'they knew the nature of the skies only 'from a tradition, which mentioned 'their being made of adamant; traditions make up the reasonings of the 'simple, and serve to silence every enquiry.

'In this sequestered vale, blessed with 'all the spontaneous productions of nature, the honeyed blossom, the refreshing breeze, the gliding brook, 'and golden fruitage, the simple inhabitants seemed happy in themselves, 'in each other; they desired no greater 'pleasures, for they knew of none 'greater; ambition, pride, and envy, 'were vices unknown among them; 'and from this peculiar simplicity of it's 'possessors, the country was called, 'The Valley of Ignorance.

'At length, however, an unhappy 'youth, more aspiring than the rest, undertook to climb the mountain's side, 'and examine the summits which were 'hitherto deemed inaccessible. The inhabitants from below gazed with wonder at his intrepidity; some applauded his courage, others censured his 'folly; still, however, he proceeded 'towards the place where the earth and 'heavens seemed to unite, and at length 'arrived at the wished-for height with 'extreme labour and assiduity.

'His first surprize was to find the 'skies, not, as he expected, within his 'reach, but still as far off as before; 'his amazement encreased when he saw 'a wide extended region lying on the 'opposite side of the mountain; but it 'rose to astonishment when he beheld a 'country at a distance more beautiful 'and alluring than even that he had just 'left behind.

'As he continued to gaze with wonder, a Genius, with a look of infinite 'modesty, approaching, offered to be 'his guide and instructor. "The distant country which you so much admire," says the angelic being, "is "called The Land of Certainty; in "that charming retreat, sentiment contributes to refine every sensual banquet; the inhabitants are blessed with "every solid enjoyment, and still more "blessed in a perfect consciousness of "their own felicity; ignorance in that "country is wholly unknown; all there "is

" is ſatisfaction without allay, for every " pleaſure firſt undergoes the examination of Reaſon. As for me, I am called the Genius of Demonſtration, and " am ſtationed here in order to conduct " every adventurer to that land of happineſs through thoſe intervening regions you ſee over-hung with fogs " and darkneſs, and horrid with foreſts, cataracts, caverns, and various " other ſhapes of danger. But follow " me, and in time I may lead you to " that diſtant deſirable land of tranquillity."

' The intrepid traveller immediately ' put himſelf under the direction of the ' Genius, and both journeying on together with a ſlow but agreeable pace, ' deceived the tedious neſs of the way by ' converſation. The beginning of the ' journey ſeemed to promiſe true ſatiſfaction; but as they proceeded forward, the ſkies became more gloomy, ' and the way more intricate; they often ' inadvertently approached the brow of ' ſome frightful precipice, or the brink ' of a torrent, and were obliged to meaſure back their former way: the gloom ' encreaſing as they proceeded, their ' pace became more ſlow; they pauſed ' at every ſtep, frequently ſtumbled, ' and their diſtruſt and timidity encreaſed. The Genius of Demonſtration ' now, therefore, adviſed his pupil to ' grope upon hands and feet, as a method, though more ſlow, yet leſs liable ' to error.

' In this manner they attempted to ' purſue their journey for ſome time, ' when they were overtaken by another ' Genius, who, with a precipitate pace, ' ſeemed travelling the ſame way. He ' was inſtantly known by the other to ' be the Genius of Probability. He ' wore two wide-extended wings at his ' back, which inceſſantly waved, without increaſing the rapidity of his motion; his countenance betrayed a confidence that the ignorant might miſtake for ſincerity, and he had but one ' eye, which was fixed in the middle of ' his forehead.

" Servant of Hormizda," cried he, ' approaching the mortal pilgrim, " if " thou art travelling to the Land of " Certainty, how is it poſſible to arrive " there under the guidance of a Genius, " who proceeds forward ſo ſlowly, and " is ſo little acquainted with the way? " Follow me, we ſhall ſoon perform " the journey to where every pleaſure " waits our arrival."

' The peremptory tone in which this ' Genius ſpoke, and the ſpeed with which ' he moved forward, induced the traveller to change his conductor; and ' leaving his modeſt companion behind, ' he proceeded forward with his more ' confident director, ſeeming not a little ' pleaſed at the encreaſed velocity of his ' motion.

' But ſoon he found reaſons to repent. ' Whenever a torrent croſſed their way, ' his guide taught him to deſpiſe the ' obſtacle by plunging him in; whenever a precipice preſented, he was directed to fling himſelf forward. Thus ' each moment miraculouſly eſcaping, ' his repeated eſcapes only ſerved to encreaſe his temerity. He led him, ' therefore, forward, amidſt infinite difficulties, till they arrived at the borders of an ocean which appeared unnavigable from the black miſts that ' lay upon it's ſurface. It's unquiet ' waves were of the darkeſt hue, and ' gave a lively repreſentation of the various agitations of the human mind.

' The Genius of Probability now ' confeſſed his temerity, owned his being an improper guide to the Land of ' Certainty, a country where no mortal ' had ever been permitted to arrive; but ' at the ſame time offered to ſupply the ' traveller with another conductor, who ' ſhould carry him to the Land of Confidence; a region where the inhabitants lived with the utmoſt tranquillity, and taſted almoſt as much ſatiſfaction as if in the Land of Certainty. ' Not waiting for a reply, he ſtamped ' three times on the ground, and called ' forth the Dæmon of Error, a gloomy ' fiend of the ſervants of Arimanes. ' The yawning earth gave up the reluctant ſavage, who ſeemed unable to ' bear the light of the day. His ſtature ' was enormous, his colour black and ' hideous, his aſpect betrayed a thouſand varying paſſions, and he ſpread ' forth pinions that were fitted for the ' moſt rapid flight. The traveller at ' firſt was ſhocked at the ſpectre; but ' finding him obedient to ſuperior power, he aſſumed his former tranquillity.

" I have called you to duty," cries the ' Genius to the Dæmon, " to bear on " your back a ſon of mortality over the " Ocean of Doubts, into the Land of

" Confidence,

" Confidence. I expect you'll perform " your commiſſion with punctuality. " And as for you," continued the Genius, addreſſing the traveller, " when " once I have bound this fillet round " your eyes, let no voice of perſuaſion, " nor threats the moſt terrifying, perſuade you to unbind it in order to " look round; keep the fillet faſt, look " not at the ocean below, and you may " certainly expect to arrive at a region " of pleaſure."

'Thus ſaying, and the traveller's eyes ' being covered, the Dæmon muttering ' curſes, raiſed him on his back, and ' inſtantly up-borne by his ſtrong pinions, directed his flight among the ' clouds. Neither the loudeſt thunder, ' nor the moſt angry tempeſt, could ' perſuade the traveller to unbind his ' eyes. The Dæmon directed his flight ' downwards, and ſkimmed the ſurface ' of the ocean; a thouſand voices, ſome ' with loud invectives, others in the ' ſarcaſtic tones of contempt, vainly endeavoured to perſuade him to look ' round; but he ſtill continued to keep ' his eyes covered, and would in all ' probability have arrived at the happy ' land, had not flattery effected what ' other means could not perform. For ' now he heard himſelf welcomed on ' every ſide to the promiſed land, and ' an univerſal ſhout of joy was ſent forth ' at his ſafe arrival; the wearied traveller, deſirous of ſeeing the long wiſhed for country, at length pulled the ' fillet from his eyes, and ventured to ' look round him. But he had unlooſed ' the band too ſoon; he was not yet ' above half way over. The Dæmon, ' who was ſtill hovering in the air, and ' had produced thoſe ſounds only in ' order to deceive, was now freed from ' his commiſſion; wherefore throwing ' the aſtoniſhed traveller from his back, ' the unhappy youth fell headlong into ' the ſubjacent Ocean of Doubts, from ' whence he never after was ſeen to ' riſe.'

LETTER XXXVIII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

WHEN Parmenio, the Grecian, had done ſomething which excited an univerſal ſhout from the ſurrounding multitude, he was inſtantly ſtruck with the doubt, that what had their approbation muſt certainly be wrong; and turning to a philoſopher who ſtood near him—' Pray, Sir,' ſays he, ' pardon me; I fear I have been ' guilty of ſome abſurdity.'

You know that I am not leſs than him a deſpiſer of the multitude; you know that I equally deteſt flattery to the great; yet ſo many circumſtances have concurred to give a luſtre to the latter part of the preſent Engliſh monarch's reign, that I cannot with-hold my contribution of praiſe; I cannot avoid the acknowledging the crowd for once juſt in their unanimous approbation.

Yet think not that battles gained, dominion extended, or enemies brought to ſubmiſſion, are the virtues which at preſent claim my admiration. Were the reigning monarch only famous for his victories, I ſhould regard his character with indifference: the boaſt of heroiſm in this enlightened age is juſtly regarded as a qualification of a very ſubordinate rank, and mankind now begin to look with becoming horror on theſe foes to man; the virtue in this aged monarch which I have at preſent in view, is one of a much more exalted nature, is one of the moſt difficult of attainment, is the leaſt praiſed of all kingly virtues, and yet deſerves the greateſt praiſe: the virtue I mean is JUSTICE; a ſtrict adminiſtration of juſtice, without ſeverity and without favour.

Of all virtues this is the moſt difficult to be practiſed by a king who has a power to pardon. All men, even tyrants themſelves, lean to mercy, when unbiaſſed by paſſions or intereſt; the heart naturally perſuades to forgiveneſs, and purſuing the dictates of this pleaſing deceiver, we are led to prefer our private ſatisfaction to public utility. What a thorough love for the public, what a ſtrong command over the paſſions, what a finely conducted judgment, muſt he poſſeſs who oppoſes the dictates of reaſon to thoſe of his heart, and prefers the future intereſt of his people to his own immediate ſatisfaction!

If ſtill to a man's own natural bias for tenderneſs, we add the numerous ſolicitations made by a criminal's friends for mercy; if we ſurvey a king not only oppoſing his own feelings, but reluctantly refuſing thoſe he regards, and this to ſatisfy the public, whoſe cries he may never hear, whoſe gratitude he may never receive; this ſurely is true greatneſs! Let us fancy ourſelves for a moment in this juſt old man's place, ſurrounded by numbers, all ſoliciting the ſame favour, a favour that Nature diſpoſes us to grant, where the inducements to pity are laid before us in the ſtrongeſt light, ſuppliants at our feet, ſome ready to reſent a refuſal, none oppoſing a compliance; let us, I ſay, ſuppoſe ourſelves in ſuch a ſituation, and I fancy we ſhould find ourſelves more apt to act the character of good-natured men than of upright magiſtrates.

What contributes to raiſe Juſtice above all other kingly virtues is, that it is ſeldom attended with a due ſhare of applauſe, and thoſe who practiſe it muſt be influenced by greater motives than empty fame. The people are generally well pleaſed with a remiſſion of puniſhment, and all that wears the appearance of humanity; it is the wiſe alone who are capable of diſcerning that impartial juſtice is the trueſt mercy: they know it to be very difficult, at once to compaſſionate, and yet condemn an object that pleads for tenderneſs.

I have been led into this commonplace train of thought by a late ſtriking inſtance in this country of the impartiality of juſtice, and of the king's inflexible reſolution of inflicting puniſhment where it was juſtly due. A man of the firſt quality, in a fit either of paſſion, melancholy, or madneſs, murdered his ſervant: it was expected that his ſtation in life would have leſſened the ignominy of his puniſhment; however, he was arraigned, condemned, and underwent the ſame degrading death with the meaneſt malefactor. It was well conſidered that virtue alone is true nobility; and that he whoſe actions ſink him even beneath the vulgar, has no right to thoſe diſtinctions which ſhould be the rewards only of merit; it was perhaps conſidered that crimes were more heinous among the higher claſſes of people, as neceſſity expoſes them to fewer temptations.

Over all the Eaſt, even China not excepted, a perſon of the ſame quality guilty of ſuch a crime, might, by giving up a ſhare of his fortune to the judge, buy off his ſentence. There are ſeveral countries even in Europe, where the ſervant is entirely the property of his maſter: if a ſlave kills his lord, he dies by the moſt excruciating tortures; but if the circumſtances are reverſed, a ſmall fine buys off the puniſhment of the offender. Happy the country where all are equal, and where thoſe who ſit as judges have too much integrity to receive a bribe, and too much honour to pity from a ſimilitude of the priſoner's title or circumſtances with their own! Such is England. Yet think not that it was always equally famed for this ſtrict impartiality: there was a time even here when title ſoftened the rigours of the law, when dignified wretches were ſuffered to live, and continue for years an equal diſgrace to juſtice and nobility.

To this day, in a neighbouring country, the great are often moſt ſcandalouſly pardoned for the moſt ſcandalous offences. A perſon is ſtill alive among them who has more than once deſerved the moſt ignominious ſeverity of juſtice. His being of the blood-royal, however, was thought a ſufficient atonement for his being a diſgrace to humanity. This remarkable perſonage took pleaſure in ſhooting at the paſſengers below, from the top of his palace; and in this moſt princely amuſement he uſually ſpent ſome time every day. He was at length arraigned by the friends of a perſon whom in this manner he had killed, was found guilty of the charge, and condemned to die. His merciful monarch pardoned him in conſideration of his rank and quality. The unrepenting criminal ſoon after renewed his uſual entertainment, and in the ſame manner killed another man. He was a ſecond time condemned; and, ſtrange to think, a ſecond time received his majeſty's pardon! Would you believe it? A third time the very ſame man was guilty of the very ſame offence; a third time therefore the laws of his country found him guilty —I wiſh for the honour of humanity I could ſuppreſs the reſt!—A third time he was pardoned! Will you not think ſuch a ſtory too extraordinary for belief? will you not think me deſcribing the ſavage inhabitants of Congo? Alas, the ſtory is but too true, and the country where it was tranſacted regards itſelf as the politeſt in Europe! Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIX.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO ****, MERCHANT IN AMSTERDAM.

CEREMONIES are different in every country, but true politeneſs is every where the ſame. Ceremonies, which take up ſo much of our attention, are only artificial helps which ignorance aſſumes, in order to imitate politeneſs, which is the reſult of good-ſenſe and good-nature. A perſon poſſeſſed of thoſe qualities, though he had never ſeen a court, is truly agreeable; and if without them, would continue a clown, though he had been all his life a gentleman uſher.

How would a Chineſe, bred up in the formalities of an Eaſtern court, be regarded, ſhould he carry all his good-manners beyond the Great Wall? How would an Engliſhman, ſkilled in all the decorums of Weſtern good-breeding, appear at an Eaſtern entertainment? Would he not be reckoned more fantaſtically ſavage than even his unbred footman!

Ceremony reſembles that baſe coin which circulates through a country by the royal mandate; it ſerves every purpoſe of real money at home, but is entirely uſeleſs if carried abroad: a perſon who ſhould attempt to circulate his native traſh in another country, would be thought either ridiculous or culpable. He is truly well-bred who knows when to value and when to deſpiſe thoſe national peculiarities which are regarded by ſome with ſo much obſervance: a traveller of taſte at once perceives that the wiſe are polite all the world over; but that fools are polite only at home.

I have now before me two very faſhionable letters upon the ſame ſubject, both written by ladies of diſtinction; one of whom leads the faſhion in England, and the other ſets the ceremonies of China. They are both regarded in their reſpective countries by all the beau monde as ſtandards of taſte, and models of true politeneſs, and both give us a true idea of what they imagine elegant in their admirers; which of them underſtands true politeneſs, or whether either, you ſhall be at liberty to determine. The Engliſh lady writes thus to her female confidant.

AS I live, my dear Charlotte, I believe the colonel will carry it at laſt; he is a moſt irreſiſtible fellow, that is flat. So well dreſſed, ſo neat, ſo ſprightly, and plays about one ſo agreeably, that, I vow, he has as much ſpirits as the Marquis of Monkeyman's Italian greyhound. I firſt ſaw him at Ranelagh; he ſhines there; he is nothing without Ranelagh, and Ranelagh nothing without him. The next day he ſent a card, and compliments, deſiring to wait on mamma and me to the muſic ſubſcription. He looked all the time with ſuch irreſiſtible impudence, that poſitively he had ſomething in his face gave me as much pleaſure as a pair-royal of naturals in my own hand. He waited on mamma and me the next morning to know how we got home; you muſt know the inſidious devil makes love to us both. Rap went the footman at the door; bounce went my heart; I thought he would have rattled the houſe down. Chariot drove up to the window, with his footmen in the pretteſt liveries; he has infinite taſte, that is flat. Mamma had ſpent all the morning at her head; but, for my part, I was in an undreſs to receive him; quite eaſy, mind that; no way diſturbed at his approach: mamma pretended to be as degagée as I, and yet I ſaw her bluſh in ſpite of her. Poſitively he is a moſt killing devil! We did nothing but laugh all the time he ſtaid with us; I never heard ſo many very good things before. At firſt he miſtook mamma for my ſiſter; at which ſhe laughed: then he miſtook my natural complexion for paint; at which I laughed: and then he ſhewed us a picture in the lid of his ſnuff-box, at which we all laughed. He plays picquet ſo very ill, and is ſo very fond of cards, and loſes with ſuch a grace, that poſitively he has won me; I have got a cool hundred, but have loſt my heart. I need not tell you that he is only a colonel of the Train-bands.

I am, dear Charlotte,
Yours for ever,
BELINDA.

The Chinese lady addresses her confidant, a poor relation of the family, upon the same occasion; in which she seems to understand decorums even better than the Western beauty. You who have resided so long in China will readily acknowledge the picture to be taken from nature; and, by being acquainted with the Chinese customs, will better apprehend the lady's meaning.

FROM YAOUA TO YAYA.

PAPA insists upon one, two, three, four hundred taels from the colonel my lover, before he parts with a lock of my hair. Ho, how I wish the dear creature may be able to produce the money, and pay papa my fortune. The colonel is reckoned the politest man in all Shensi. The first visit he paid at our house; mercy, what stooping, and cringing, and stopping, and figeting, and going back, and creeping forward, there was between him and papa, one would have thought he had got the seventeen books of ceremonies all by heart. When he was come into the hall he flourished his hands three times in a very graceful manner. Papa, who would not be outdone, flourished his four times; upon this the colonel began again, and both thus continued flourishing for some minutes in the politest manner imaginable. I was posted in the usual place behind the screen, where I saw the whole ceremony through a slit. Of this the colonel was sensible, for papa informed him. I would have given the world to have shewn him my little shoes, but had no opportunity. It was the first time I had ever the happiness of seeing any man but papa; and I vow, my dear Yaya, I thought my three souls would actually have fled from my lips. Ho, but he looked most charmingly; he is reckoned the best shaped man in the whole province, for he is very fat, and very short: but even those natural advantages are improved by his dress, which is fashionable past description. His head was close shaven, all but the crown, and the hair of that was braided into a most beautiful tail, that reached down to his heels, and was terminated by a bunch of yellow roses. Upon his first entering the room, I could easily perceive he had been highly perfumed with assafœtida. But then his looks, his looks, my dear Yaya, were irresistible! He kept his eyes stedfastly fixed on the wall during the whole ceremony, and I sincerely believe no accident could have discomposed his gravity, or drawn his eyes away. After a polite silence of two hours, he gallantly begged to have the singing women introduced, purely for my amusement. After one of them had for some time entertained us with her voice, the colonel and she retired for some minutes together. I thought they would never have come back; I must own he is a most agreeable creature. Upon his return, they again renewed the concert, and he continued to gaze upon the wall as usual; when, in less than half an hour more, Ho! but he retired out of the room with another. He is indeed a most agreeable creature.

When he came to take his leave, the whole ceremony began afresh; papa would see him to the door, but the colonel swore he would rather see the earth turned upside down than permit him to stir a single step, and papa was at last obliged to comply. As soon as he was got to the door, papa went out to see him on horse-back: here they continued half an hour bowing and cringing, before one would mount, or the other go in; but the colonel was at last victorious. He had scarce gone an hundred paces from the house, when papa running out, halloo'd after him—'A good journey.' Upon which the colonel returned, and would see papa into his house before ever he would depart. He was no sooner got home than he sent me a very fine present of duck eggs painted of twenty different colours. His generosity I own has won me. I have ever since been trying over the eight letters of good fortune, and have great hopes. All I have to apprehend is, that after he has married me, and that I am carried to his house close shut up in my chair, when he comes to have the first sight of my face, he may shut me up a second time, and send me back to papa. However, I shall appear as fine as possible; mamma and I have been to buy the cloaths for my wedding. I am to have a new *fong whang* in my hair, the beak of which will reach down to my nose; the milliner from whom we bought that and our ribbons cheated us as if she had no conscience, and so to quiet mine I cheated her. All this is fair, you know. I remain, my dear Yaya, your ever faithful,

YAOUA.

LETTER

LETTER XL.

FROM THE SAME.

YOU have always teſtified the higheſt eſteem for the Engliſh poets, and thought them not inferior to the Greeks, Romans, or even the Chineſe, in the art. But it is now thought, even by the Engliſh themſelves, that the race of their poets is extinct; every day produces ſome pathetic exclamation upon the decadence of taſte and genius. 'Pegaſus,' ſay they, 'has ſlipped the bridle from his mouth, and our modern bards attempt to direct his flight by catching him by the tail.'

Yet, my friend, it is only among the ignorant that ſuch diſcourſes prevail; men of true diſcernment can ſee ſeveral poets ſtill among the Engliſh, ſome of whom equal, if not ſurpaſs, their predeceſſors. The ignorant term that alone poetry which is couched in a certain number of ſyllables in every line, where a vapid thought is drawn out into a number of verſes of equal length, and perhaps pointed with rhymes at the end. But glowing ſentiment, ſtriking imagery, conciſe expreſſion, natural deſcription, and modulated periods, are full ſufficient entirely to fill up my idea of this art, and make way to every paſſion.

If my idea of poetry therefore be juſt, the Engliſh are not at preſent ſo deſtitute of poetical merit as they ſeem to imagine. I can ſee ſeveral poets in diſguiſe among them; men furniſhed with that ſtrength of ſoul, ſublimity of ſentiment, and grandeur of expreſſion, which conſtitute the character. Many of the writers of their modern odes, ſonnets, tragedies, or rebuſes, it is true, deſerve not the name, though they have done nothing but clink rhymes and meaſure ſyllables for years together; their Johnſons and Smollets are truly poets; though, for aught I know, they never made a ſingle verſe in their whole lives.

In every incipient language the poet and the proſe writer are very diſtinct in their qualifications: the poet ever proceeds firſt, treading unbeaten paths, enriching his native funds, and employed in new adventures. The other follows with more cautious ſteps; and, though ſlow in his motions, treaſures up every uſeful or pleaſing diſcovery. But when once all the extent and the force of the language is known, the poet then ſeems to reſt from his labour, and is at length overtaken by his aſſiduous purſuer. Both characters are then blended into one; the hiſtorian and orator catch all the poet's fire, and leave him no real mark of diſtinction except the iteration of numbers regularly returning. Thus, in the decline of ancient European learning, Seneca, though he wrote in proſe, is as much a poet as Lucan; and Longinus, though but a critic, more ſublime than Apollonius.

From this then it appears that poetry is not diſcontinued, but altered, among the Engliſh at preſent; the outward form ſeems different from what it was, but poetry ſtill continues internally the ſame; the only queſtion remains whether the metric feet uſed by the good writers of of the laſt age, or the proſaic numbers employed by the good writers of this, be preferable. And here the practice of the laſt age appears to me ſuperior; they ſubmitted to the reſtraint of numbers and ſimilar ſounds; and this reſtraint, inſtead of diminiſhing, augmented the force of their ſentiment and ſtile. Fancy reſtrained may be compared to a fountain which plays higheſt by diminiſhing the aperture. Of the truth of this maxim, in every language, every fine writer is perfectly ſenſible from his own experience; and yet to explain the reaſon would be perhaps as difficult as to make a frigid genius profit by the diſcovery.

There is ſtill another reaſon in favour of the practice of the laſt age, to be drawn from the variety of modulation. The muſical period in proſe is confined to a very few changes; the numbers in verſe are capable of infinite variation. I ſpeak not now from the practice of modern verſe-writers, few of whom have any idea of muſical variety, but run on in the ſame monotonous flow through the whole poem; but rather from the example of their former poets, who were tolerable maſters of this variety, and

alſo from a capacity in the language of ſtill admitting various unanticipated muſic.

Several rules have been drawn up for varying the poetic meaſure, and critics have elaborately talked of accents and ſyllables; but good ſenſe and a fine ear, which rules can never teach, are what alone can in ſuch a caſe determine. The rapturous flowings of joy, or the interruptions of indignation, require accents placed entirely different, and a ſtructure conſonant to the emotions they would expreſs. Changing paſſions, and numbers changing with thoſe paſſions, make the whole ſecret of Weſtern as well as Eaſtern poetry. In a word, the great faults of the modern profeſſed Engliſh poets are, that they ſeem to want numbers which ſhould vary with the paſſion, and are more employed in deſcribing to the imagination than ſtriking at the heart.

LETTER XLI.

FROM THE SAME.

SOME time ſince I ſent thee, O holy diſciple of Confucius, an account of the grand abbey or mauſoleum of the kings and heroes of this nation. I have ſince been introduced to a temple not ſo ancient, but far ſuperior in beauty and magnificence. In this, which is the moſt conſiderable of the empire, there are no pompous inſcriptions, no flattery paid the dead, but all is elegant and awfully ſimple. There are however a few rags hung round the walls, which have at a vaſt expence been taken from the enemy in the preſent war. The ſilk of which they are compoſed, when new, might be valued at half a ſtring of copper money in China; yet this wiſe people fitted out a fleet and an army in order to ſeize them; though now grown old, and ſcarce capable of being patched up into a handkerchief. By this conqueſt the Engliſh are ſaid to have gained, and the French to have loſt, much honour. Is the honour of European nations placed only in tattered ſilk?

In this temple I was permitted to remain during the whole ſervice; and were you not already acquainted with the religion of the Engliſh, you might, from my deſcription, be inclined to believe them as groſsly idolatrous as the diſciples of Lao. The idol which they ſeem to addreſs, ſtrides like a Coloſſus over the door of the inner temple, which here, as with the Jews, is eſteemed the moſt ſacred part of the building. It's oracles are delivered in an hundred various tones, which ſeem to inſpire the worſhippers with enthuſiaſm and awe: an old woman, who appeared to be the prieſteſs, was employed in various attitudes, as ſhe felt the inſpiration. When it began to ſpeak, all the people remained fixed in ſilent attention, nodding aſſent, looking approbation, appearing highly edified by thoſe ſounds, which to a ſtranger might ſeem inarticulate and unmeaning.

When the idol had done ſpeaking, and the prieſteſs had locked up it's lungs with a key, obſerving almoſt all the company leaving the temple, I concluded the ſervice was over, and taking my hat, was going to walk away with the crowd, when I was ſtopt by the man in black, who aſſured me that the ceremony had ſcarcely yet begun. 'What!' cried I, 'do I not ſee almoſt the whole body of the worſhippers leaving the church? Would you perſuade me that ſuch numbers who profeſs religion and morality, would in this ſhameleſs manner quite the temple before the ſervice was concluded? You ſurely miſtake; not even the Kalmouks would be guilty of ſuch an indecency, though all the object of their worſhip was but a joint-ſtool.' My friend ſeemed to bluſh for his countrymen, aſſuring me that thoſe whom I ſaw running away were only a parcel of muſical blockheads, whoſe paſſion was merely for ſounds, and whoſe heads were as empty as a fiddle-caſe. 'Thoſe who remain behind,' ſays he, 'are the true Religious; they make uſe of muſic to warm their hearts, and to lift them to a proper pitch of rapture: examine their behaviour, and you will confeſs there are ſome among us who practiſe true devotion.'

I now looked round me as he directed, but ſaw nothing of that fervent devotion which he had promiſed: one of the worſhippers appeared to be ogling the

the company through a glafs; another was fervent, not in addreffes to Heaven, but to his miftrefs; a third whifpered, a fourth took fnuff, and the prieft himfelf, in a drowfy tone, read over the *duties* of the day.

'Blefs my eyes!' cried I, as I happened to look towards the door, 'what do I fee! one of the worfhippers fallen faft afleep, and actually funk down on his cufhion! Is he now enjoying the benefit of a trance, or does he receive the influence of fome myfterious vifion!'—'Alas! alas!' replied my companion, 'no fuch thing; he has only had the misfortune of eating too hearty a dinner, and finds it impoffible to keep his eyes open.' Turning to another part of the temple, I perceived a young lady juft in the fame circumftances and attitude. 'Strange!' cried I, 'can fhe too have over-eaten herfelf?'—'O, fie!' replied my friend, 'you now grow cenforious. She grow drowfy from eating too much! that would be profanation. She only fleeps now from having fat up all night at a brag-party.'—'Turn me where I will, then,' fays I, 'I can perceive no fingle fymptom of devotion among the worfhippers, except from that old woman in the corner, who fits groaning behind the long fticks of a mourning fan; fhe indeed feems greatly edified with what fhe hears.'—'Aye,' replied my friend, 'I knew we fhould find fome to catch you; I know her; that is the deaf lady who lives in the cloifters.'

In fhort, the remiffnefs of behaviour in almoft all the worfhippers, and fome even of the guardians, ftruck me with furprize. I had been taught to believe that none were ever promoted to offices in the temple, but men remarkable for their fuperior fanctity, learning, and rectitude; that there was no fuch thing heard of as perfons being introduced into the church merely to oblige a fenator, or provide for the younger branch of a noble family: I expected, as their minds were continually fet upon heavenly things, to fee their eyes directed there alfo, and hoped from their behaviour to perceive their inclinations correfpond with their duty. But I am fince informed, that fome are appointed to prefide over temples they never vifit; and, while they receive all the money, are contented with letting others do all the good. Adieu.

LETTER XLII.

FROM FUM HOAM, TO LIEN CHI ALTANGI, THE DISCONTENTED WANDERER, BY THE WAY OF MOSCOW.

MUST I ever continue to condemn thy perfeverance, and blame that curiofity, which deftroys thy happinefs! What yet untafted banquet, what luxury yet unknown, has rewarded thy painful adventures! Name a pleafure which thy native country could not amply procure; frame a wifh that might not have been fatisfied in China! Why then fuch toil, and fuch danger, in purfuit of raptures within your reach at home?

The Europeans, you will fay, excel us in fciences and in arts; thofe fciences which bound the afpiring wifh, and thofe arts which tend to gratify even unreftrained defire. They may perhaps out-do us in the arts of building fhips, cafting cannons, or meafuring mountains; but are they fuperior in the greateft of all arts, the art of governing kingdoms and ourfelves?

When I compare the hiftory of China with that of Europe, how do I exult in being a native of that kingdom which derives it's original from the fun! Upon opening the Chinefe hiftory, I there behold an ancient extended empire, eftablifhed by laws which Nature and reafon feem to have dictated. The duty of children to their parents, a duty which Nature implants in every breaft, forms the ftrength of that government which has fubfifted for time immemorial. Filial obedience is the firft and greateft requifite of a ftate; by this we become good fubjects to our emperors, capable of behaving with juft fubordination to our fuperiors, and grateful dependents on Heaven; by this we become fonder of marriage, in order to be capable of exacting obedience from others in our turn; by this we become good magiftrates, for early fubmiffion is the trueft leffon to thofe who would learn to rule.

By

By this the whole ſtate may be ſaid to reſemble one family, of which the emperor is the protector, father, and friend.

In this happy region, ſequeſtered from the reſt of mankind, I ſee a ſucceſſion of princes, who in general conſidered themſelves as the fathers of their people; a race of philoſophers, who bravely combated idolatry, prejudice, and tyranny, at the expence of their private happineſs and immediate reputation. Whenever an uſurper or a tyrant intruded into the adminiſtration, how have all the good and great been united againſt him? Can European hiſtory produce an inſtance like that of the twelve mandarines, who all reſolved to apprize the vicious emperor Tiſiang of the irregularity of his conduct? He who firſt undertook the dangerous taſk, was cut in two by the emperor's order; the ſecond was ordered to be tormented, and then put to a cruel death; the third undertook the taſk with intrepidity, and was inſtantly ſtabbed by the tyrant's hand: in this manner they all ſuffered, except one. But not to be turned from his purpoſe, the brave ſurvivor entering the palace with the inſtruments of torture in his hand—'Here,' cried he, addreſſing himſelf to the throne, 'here, O Tiſiang, 'are the marks your faithful ſubjects 'receive for their loyalty; I am wearied with ſerving a tyrant, and now 'come for my reward.' The emperor, ſtruck with his intrepidity, inſtantly forgave the boldneſs of his conduct, and reformed his own. What European annals can boaſt of a tyrant thus reclaimed to lenity!

When five brethren had ſet upon the great emperor Ginſong alone, with his ſabre he ſlew four of them; he was ſtruggling with the fifth, when his guards coming up, were going to cut the conſpirator into a thouſand pieces. 'No, 'no,' cried the emperor, with a calm and placid countenance, 'of all his bro'thers he is the only one remaining; at 'leaſt let one of the family be ſuffered 'to live, that his aged parents may have 'ſomebody left to feed and comfort 'them.'

When Haitong, the laſt emperor of the houſe of Ming, ſaw himſelf beſieged in his own city by the uſurper, he was reſolved to iſſue from his palace with ſix hundred of his guards, and give the enemy battle; but they forſook him. Being thus without hopes, and chuſing death rather than to fall alive into the hands of a rebel, he retired to his garden, conducting his little daughter, an only child, in his hand; there, in a private arbour, unſheathing his ſword, he ſtabbed the young innocent to the heart, and then diſpatching himſelf, left the following words written with his blood on the border of his veſt—'Forſaken 'by my ſubjects, abandoned by my 'friends, uſe my body as you will, but 'ſpare, O ſpare, my people!'

An empire which has thus continued invariably the ſame for ſuch a long ſucceſſion of ages, which, though at laſt conquered by the Tartars, ſtill preſerves it's ancient laws and learning, and may more properly be ſaid to annex the dominions of Tartary to it's empire, than to admit a foreign conqueror; an empire as large as Europe, governed by one law, acknowledging ſubjection to one prince, and experiencing but one revolution of any continuance in the ſpace of four thouſand years: this is ſomething ſo peculiarly great, that I am naturally led to deſpiſe all other nations on the compariſon. Here we ſee no religious perſecutions, no enmity between mankind, for difference in opinion. The diſciples of Lao Kium, the idolatrous ſectaries of Fohi, and the philoſophical children of Confucius, only ſtrive to ſhew by their actions the truth of their doctrines.

Now turn from this happy peaceful ſcene to Europe, the theatre of intrigue, avarice, and ambition. How many revolutions does it not experience in the compaſs even of one age? and to what do theſe revolutions tend but the deſtruction of thouſands? Every great event is replete with ſome new calamity. The ſeaſons of ſerenity are paſſed over in ſilence, their hiſtories ſeem to ſpeak only of the ſtorm.

There we ſee the Romans extending their power over barbarous nations, and in turn becoming a prey to thoſe whom they had conquered. We ſee thoſe barbarians, when become Chriſtians, engaged in continual wars with the followers of Mahomet; or, more dreadful ſtill, deſtroying each other. We ſee councils in the earlier ages authoriſing every iniquity; cruſades ſpreading deſolation in the country left, as well as that to be conquered; excommunications freeing ſubjects from natural allegiance, and perſuading to ſedition; blood flowing

flowing in the fields and on ſcaffolds; tortures uſed as arguments to convince the recuſant: to heighten the horror of the piece, behold it ſhaded with wars, rebellions, treaſons, plots, politics, and poiſon.

And what advantage has any country of Europe obtained from ſuch calamities? Scarce any. Their diſſentions for more than a thouſand years have ſerved to make each other unhappy, but have enriched none. All the great nations ſtill nearly preſerve their ancient limits; none have been able to ſubdue the other, and ſo terminate the diſpute. France, in ſpite of the conqueſts of Edward the Third, and Henry the Fifth, notwithſtanding the efforts of Charles the Fifth, and Philip the Second, ſtill remains within it's ancient limits. Spain, Germany, Great Britain, Poland, the ſtates of the North, are nearly ſtill the ſame. What effect then has the blood of ſo many thouſands, the deſtruction of ſo many cities, produced? Nothing either great or conſiderable. The Chriſtian princes have loſt indeed much from the enemies of Chriſtendom, but they have gained nothing from each other. Their princes, becauſe they preferred ambition to juſtice, deſerve the character of enemies to mankind; and their prieſts, by neglecting morality for opinion, have miſtaken the intereſts of ſociety.

On whatever ſide we regard the hiſtory of Europe, we ſhall perceive it to be a tiſſue of crimes, follies, and misfortunes, of politics without deſign, and wars without conſequence; in this long liſt of human infirmity, a great character, or a ſhining virtue, may ſometimes happen to ariſe, as we often meet a cottage or a cultivated ſpot in the moſt hideous wilderneſs. But for an Alfred, an Alphonſo, a Frederic, or one Alexander III. we meet a thouſand princes who have diſgraced humanity.

LETTER XLIII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

WE have juſt received accounts here, that Voltaire the poet and philoſopher of Europe is dead! He is now beyond the reach of the thouſand enemies who, while living, degraded his writings, and branded his character. Scarce a page of his latter productions that does not betray the agonies of an heart bleeding under the ſcourge of unmerited reproach. Happy therefore at laſt in eſcaping from calumny, happy in leaving a world that was unworthy of him and his writings.

Let others, my friend, beſtrew the hearſes of the great with panegyric; but ſuch a loſs as the world has now ſuffered affects me with ſtronger emotions. When a philoſopher dies, I conſider myſelf as loſing a patron, an inſtructor, and a friend. I conſider the world as loſing one who might ſerve to conſole her amidſt the deſolations of war and ambition. Nature every day produces in abundance men capable of filling all the requiſite duties of authority; but ſhe is niggard in the birth of an exalted mind, ſcarcely producing in a century a ſingle genius to bleſs and enlighten a degenerate age. Prodigal in the production of kings, governors, mandarines, chams, and courtiers, ſhe ſeems to have forgotten, for more than three thouſand years, the manner in which ſhe once formed the brain of a Confucius; and well it is ſhe has forgotten, when a bad world gave him ſo very bad a reception.

Whence, my friend, this malevolence which has ever purſued the great even to the tomb? whence this more than fiend-like diſpoſition of embittering the lives of thoſe who would make us more wiſe and more happy?

When I caſt my eye over the fates of ſeveral philoſophers, who have at different periods enlightened mankind, I muſt confeſs it inſpires me with the moſt degrading reflections on humanity. When I read of the ſtripes of Mentius, the tortures of Tchin, the bowl of Socrates, and the bath of Seneca; when I hear of the perſecutions of Dante, the impriſonment of Galileo, the indignities ſuffered by Montange, the baniſhment of Carteſius, the infamy of Bacon;

and that even Locke himſelf eſcaped not without reproach; when I think on ſuch ſubjects, I heſitate whether moſt to blame, the ignorance or the villainy of my fellow-creatures.

Should you look for the character of Voltaire among the journaliſts and illiterate writers of the age, you will there find him characterized as a monſter, with a head turned to wiſdom, and an heart inclining to vice; the powers of his mind and the baſeneſs of his principles forming a deteſtable contraſt. But ſeek for his character among writers like himſelf, and you find him very differently deſcribed. You perceive him in their accounts poſſeſſed of good-nature, humanity, greatneſs of ſoul, fortitude, and almoſt every virtue: in this deſcription thoſe who might be ſuppoſed beſt acquainted with his character are unanimous. The royal Pruſſian*, Dargents†, Diderot‡, D'Alembert, and Fontenelle, conſpire in drawing the picture, in deſcribing the friend of man and the patron of every riſing genius.

An inflexible perſeverance in what he thought was right, and a generous deteſtation of flattery, formed the groundwork of this great man's character. From theſe principles many ſtrong virtues and few faults aroſe; as he was warm in his friendſhip, and ſevere in reſentment, all that mention him ſeem poſſeſſed of the ſame qualities, and ſpeak of him with rapture or deteſtation. A perſon of his eminence can have few indifferent as to his character; every reader muſt be an enemy or an admirer.

This poet began the courſe of glory ſo early as the age of eighteen, and even then was author of a tragedy which deſerves applauſe. Poſſeſſed of a ſmall patrimony, he preſerved his independence in an age of venality, and ſupported the dignity of learning, by teaching his cotemporary writers to live, like him, above all the favours of the great. He was baniſhed his native country for a ſatire upon the royal concubine. He had accepted the place of hiſtorian to the French king, but refuſed to keep it, when he found it was preſented only in order that he ſhould be the firſt flatterer of the ſtate.

The great Pruſſian received him as an ornament to his kingdom, and had ſenſe enough to value his friendſhip, and profit by his inſtructions. In this court he continued, till an intrigue, with which the world ſeems hitherto unacquainted, obliged him to quit that country. His own happineſs, the happineſs of the monarch, *of his ſiſter*, of a part of the court, rendered his departure neceſſary.

Tired at length of courts, and all the follies of the great, he retired to Switzerland, a country of liberty, where he enjoyed tranquillity and the muſe. Here, though without any taſte for magnificence himſelf, he uſually entertained at his table the learned and polite of Europe, who were attracted by a deſire of ſeeing a perſon from whom they had received ſo much ſatisfaction. The entertainment was conducted with the utmoſt elegance, and the converſation was that of philoſophers. Every country that at once united liberty and ſcience, were his peculiar favourites. The being an Engliſhman was to him a character that claimed admiration and reſpect.

Between Voltaire and the diſciples of Confucius, there are many differences; however, being of a different opinion does not in the leaſt diminiſh my eſteem; I am not diſpleaſed with my brother, becauſe he happens to aſk our father for favours in a different manner from me. Let his errors reſt in peace, his excellencies deſerve admiration; let me with the wiſe admire his wiſdom; let the envious and the ignorant ridicule his foibles; the folly of others is ever moſt ridiculous to thoſe who are themſelves moſt fooliſh. Adieu.

* Philoſophe Sans Souci. † Let. Chin. ‡ Encycloped.

LETTER XLIV.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO HINGPO, A SLAVE IN PERSIA.

IT is impoſſible to form a philoſophic ſyſtem of happineſs which is adapted to every condition of life, ſince every perſon who travels in this great purſuit takes a ſeparate road. The differing colours which ſuit different complexions, are not more various than the different pleaſures appropriated to different minds. The various ſects who have pretended to give leſſons to inſtruct me in happineſs, have deſcribed their own particular ſenſations, without conſidering ours; have only loaded their diſciples with conſtraint, without adding to their real felicity.

If I find pleaſure in dancing, how ridiculous would it be in me to preſcribe ſuch an amuſement for the entertainment of a cripple! Should he, on the other hand, place his chief delight in painting, yet would he be abſurd in recommending the ſame reliſh to one who had loſt the power of diſtinguiſhing colours. General directions are therefore commonly uſeleſs; and to be particular would exhauſt volumes, ſince each individual may require a particular ſyſtem of precepts to direct his choice.

Every mind ſeems capable of entertaining a certain quantity of happineſs, which no inſtitutions can increaſe, no circumſtances alter, and entirely independent on fortune. Let any man compare his preſent fortune with the paſt, and he will probably find himſelf, upon the whole, neither better nor worſe than formerly.

Gratified ambition, or irreparable calamity, may produce tranſient ſenſations of pleaſure or diſtreſs. Thoſe ſtorms may diſcompoſe in proportion as they are ſtrong, or the mind is pliant to their impreſſion. But the ſoul, though at firſt lifted up by the event, is every day operated upon with diminiſhed influence; and at length ſubſides into the level of it's uſual tranquillity. Should ſome unexpected turn of fortune take thee from fetters, and place thee on a throne, exultation would be natural upon the change; but the temper, like the face, would ſoon reſume it's native ſerenity.

Every wiſh, therefore, which leads us to expect happineſs ſomewhere elſe but where we are, every inſtitution which teaches us that we ſhould be better, by being poſſeſſed of ſomething new, which promiſes to lift us a ſtep higher than we are, only lays a foundation for uneaſineſs, becauſe it contracts debts which we cannot repay; it calls that a good, which when we have found it, will in fact add nothing to our happineſs.

To enjoy the preſent, without regret for the paſt, or ſolicitude for the future, has been the advice rather of poets than philoſophers. And yet the precept ſeems more rational than is generally imagined. It is the only general precept reſpecting the purſuit of happineſs, that can be applied with propriety to every condition of life. The man of pleaſure, the man of buſineſs, and the philoſopher, are equally intereſted in it's diſquiſition. If we do not find happineſs in the preſent moment, in what ſhall we find it? Either in reflecting on the paſt, or prognoſticating the future. But let us ſee how theſe are capable of producing ſatisfaction.

A remembrance of what is paſt, and an anticipation of what is to come, ſeem to be the two faculties by which man differs moſt from other animals. Though brutes enjoy them in a limited degree, yet their whole life ſeems taken up in the preſent, regardleſs of the paſt and the future. Man, on the contrary, endeavours to derive his happineſs, and experiences moſt of his miſeries, from theſe two ſources.

Is this ſuperiority of reflection a prerogative of which we ſhould boaſt, and for which we ſhall thank Nature; or is it a misfortune of which we ſhould complain and be humble? Either from the abuſe, or from the nature of things, it certainly makes our condition more miſerable.

Had we a privilege of calling up, by the power of memory, only ſuch paſſages as were pleaſing, unmixed with ſuch as were diſagreeable, we might then excite

at pleasure an ideal happiness, perhaps more poignant than actual sensation. But this is not the case; the past is never represented without some disagreeable circumstance, which tarnishes all it's beauty; the remembrance of an evil carries in it nothing agreeable, and to remember a good is always accompanied with regret. Thus we lose more than we gain by remembrance.

And we shall find our expectation of the future to be a gift more distressful even than the former. To fear an approaching evil is certainly a most disagreeable sensation; and in expecting an approaching good, we experience the inquietude of wanting actual possession.

Thus, which ever way we look, the prospect is disagreeable. Behind, we have left pleasures we shall never more enjoy, and therefore regret; and before, we see pleasures which we languish to possess, and are consequently uneasy till we possess them. Was there any method of seizing the present, unimbittered by such reflections, then would our state be tolerably easy.

This, indeed, is the endeavour of all mankind, who, untutored by philosophy, pursue as much as they can a life of amusement and dissipation. Every rank in life, and every size of understanding, seems to follow this alone; or not pursuing it, deviates from happiness. The man of pleasure pursues dissipation by profession; the man of business pursues it not less, as every voluntary labour he undergoes is only dissipation in disguise. The philosopher himself, even while he reasons upon the subject, does it unknowingly with a view of dissipating the thoughts of what he was, or what he must be.

The subject, therefore, comes to this. Which is the most perfect sort of dissipation: pleasure, business, or philosophy? which best serves to exclude those uneasy sensations, which *memory* or *anticipation* produce?

The enthusiasm of pleasure charms only by intervals. The highest rapture lasts only for a moment; and all the senses seem so combined, as to be soon tired into languor by the gratification of any one of them. It is only among the poets we hear of men changing to one delight, when satiated with another. In nature it is very different: the glutton, when sated with the full meal, is unqualified to feel the real pleasure of drinking; the drunkard, in turn, finds few of those transports which lovers boast in enjoyment; and the lover, when cloyed, finds a diminution of every other appetite. Thus, after a full indulgence of any one sense, the man of pleasure finds a languor in all, is placed in a chasm between past and expected enjoyment, perceives an interval which must be filled up. The present can give no satisfaction, because he has already robbed it of every charm: a mind thus left without immediate gratification. Instead of a life of dissipation, none has more frequent conversations with disagreeable *self* than he: his enthusiasms are but few and transient; his appetites, like angry creditors, continually making fruitless demands for what he is unable to pay; and the greater his former pleasure, the more impatient his expectations: a life of pleasure is therefore the most unpleasing life in the world.

Habit has rendered the man of business more cool in his desires; he finds less regret for past pleasures, and less solicitude for those to come. The life he now leads, though tainted in some measure with hope, is yet not afflicted so strongly with regret, and is less divided between short-lived rapture and lasting anguish. The pleasures he has enjoyed are not so vivid, and those he has to expect, cannot consequently create so much anxiety.

The philosopher, who extends his regard to all mankind, must have still a smaller concern for what has already affected, or may hereafter affect himself; the concerns of others make his whole study, and that study is his pleasure; and this pleasure is continuing in it's nature, because it can be changed at will, leaving but few of these anxious intervals which are employed in remembrance or anticipation. The philosopher, by this means, leads a life of almost continued dissipation; and reflection, which makes the uneasiness and misery of others, serves as a companion and instructor to him.

In a word, positive happiness is constitutional, and incapable of encrease; misery is artificial, and generally proceeds from our folly. Philosophy can add to our happiness in no other manner, but by diminishing our misery; it should not pretend to encrease our present

ſent ſtock, but make us œconomiſts of what we are poſſeſſed of. The great ſource of calamity lies in regret or anticipation: he, therefore, is moſt wiſe, who thinks of the preſent alone, regardleſs of the paſt or the future. This is impoſſible to the man of pleaſure; it is difficult to the man of buſineſs; and is in ſome meaſure attainable by the philoſopher. Happy were we all born philoſophers; all born with a talent of thus diſſipating our own cares, by ſpreading them upon all mankind! Adieu.

LETTER XLV.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

THOUGH the frequent invitations I receive from men of diſtinction here might excite the vanity of ſome, I am quite mortified however when I conſider the motives that inſpire their civility. I am ſent for not to be treated as a friend, but to ſatisfy curioſity; not to be entertained ſo much as wondered at; the ſame earneſtneſs which excites them to ſee a Chineſe, would have made them equally proud of a viſit from the rhinoceros.

From the higheſt to the loweſt, this people ſeem fond of ſights and monſters. I am told of a perſon here who gets a very comfortable livelihood by making wonders, and then ſelling or ſhewing them to the people for money, no matter how inſignificant they were in the beginning; by locking them up cloſe, and ſhewing for money, they ſoon became prodigies! His firſt eſſay in this way was to exhibit himſelf as a wax-work figure behind a glaſs door at a puppet-ſhow. Thus keeping the ſpectators at a proper diſtance, and having his head adorned with a copper crown, he looked extremely *natural, and very like the life itſelf*. He continued this exhibition with ſucceſs, till an involuntary fit of ſneezing brought him to life before all the ſpectators, and conſequently rendered him for that time as entirely uſeleſs, as the peaceable inhabitant of a catacomb.

Determined to act the ſtatue no more, he next levied contributions under the figure of an Indian king; and by painting his face, and counterfeiting the ſavage howl, he frighted ſeveral ladies and children with amazing ſucceſs: in this manner, therefore, he might have lived very comfortably, had he not been arreſted for a debt that was contracted when he was the figure in wax-work; thus his face underwent an involuntary ablution, and he found himſelf reduced to his primitive complexion and indigence.

After ſome time, being freed from gaol, he was now grown wiſer, and inſtead of making himſelf a wonder, was reſolved only to make wonders. He learned the art of paſting up mummies; was never at a loſs for an artificial *luſus naturæ*; nay, it has been reported, that he has ſold ſeven petrified lobſters of his own manufacture to a noted collector of rarities; but this the learned Cracovius Putridus has undertaken to refute in a very elaborate diſſertation.

His laſt wonder was nothing more than an halter, yet by this halter he gained more than by all his former exhibitions. The people, it ſeems, had got it in their heads, that a certain noble criminal was to be hanged with a ſilken rope. Now there was nothing they ſo much deſired to ſee as this very rope; and he was reſolved to gratify their curioſity: he therefore got one made, not only of ſilk, but, to render it more ſtriking, ſeveral threads of gold were intermixed. The people paid their money only to ſee ſilk, but were highly ſatiſfied when they found it was mixed with gold into the bargain. It is ſcarce neceſſary to mention, that the projector ſold his ſilken rope for almoſt what it had coſt him, as ſoon as the criminal was known to be hanged in hempen materials.

By their fondneſs of ſights, one would be apt to imagine, that inſtead of deſiring to ſee things as they ſhould be, they are rather ſolicitous of ſeeing them as they ought not to be. A cat with four legs is diſregarded, though never ſo uſeful; but if it has but two, and is conſequently incapable of catching mice, it

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is reckoned inestimable, and every man of taste is ready to raise the auction. A man, though in his person faultless as an aerial genius, might starve; but if stuck over with hideous warts like a porcupine, his fortune is made for ever, and he may propagate the breed with impunity and applause.

A good woman in my neighbourhood, who was bred an habit-maker, though she handled her needle tolerably well, could scarcely get employment. But being obliged by an accident to have both her hands cut off from the elbows, what would in another country have been her ruin, made her fortune here; she now was thought more fit for her trade than before; business flowed in apace, and all people paid for seeing the mantua-maker who wrought without hands.

A gentleman shewing me his collection of pictures, stopped at one with peculiar admiration: 'There,' cries he, 'is an inestimable piece!' I gazed at the picture for some time, but could see none of those graces with which he seemed enraptured; it appeared to me the most paltry piece of the whole collection: I therefore demanded where those beauties lay, of which I was yet insensible. 'Sir,' cries he, 'the merit does not consist in the piece, but in the manner in which it was done. The painter drew the whole with his foot, and held the pencil between his toes: I bought it at a very great price; for peculiar merit should ever be rewarded.'

But these people are not more fond of wonders, than liberal in rewarding those who shew them. From the wonderful dog of knowledge, at present under the patronage of the nobility, down to the man with the box, who professes to shew *the most imitation of nature that was ever seen*, they all live in luxury. A singing woman shall collect subscriptions in her own coach and six; a fellow shall make a fortune by tossing a straw from his toe to his nose; one in particular has found that eating fire was the most ready way to live; and another, who gingles several bells fixed to his cap, is the only man that I know of who has received emolument from the labours of his head.

A young author, a man of good-nature and learning, was complaining to me some nights ago of this misplaced generosity of the times. 'Here,' says he, 'have I spent part of my youth in attempting to instruct and amuse my fellow-creatures, and all my reward has been solitude, poverty, and reproach; while a fellow, possessed of even the smallest share of fiddling merit, or who has perhaps learned to whistle double, is rewarded, applauded, and caressed!'—'Pr'ythee, young man,' says I to him, 'are you ignorant, that in so large a city as this, it is better to be an amusing than an useful member of society? Can you leap up, and touch your feet four times before you come to the ground?'—'No, Sir.'—'Can you pimp for a man of quality?'—'No, Sir.'—'Can you stand upon two horses at full speed?'—'No, Sir.'—'Can you swallow a pen-knife?'—'I can do none of these tricks.'—'Why, then,' cried I, 'there is no other prudent means of subsistence left but to apprize the town that you speedily intend to eat up your own nose, by subscription.'

I have frequently regretted that none of our Eastern posture-masters or show-men have ever ventured to England. I should be pleased to see that money circulate in Asia, which is now sent to Italy and France, in order to bring their vagabonds hither. Several of our tricks would undoubtedly give the English high satisfaction. Men of fashion would be greatly pleased with the postures, as well as the condescension, of our dancing-girls; and ladies would equally admire the conductors of our fire-works. What an agreeable surprize would it be to see a huge fellow with whiskers flash a charged blunderbuss full in a lady's face, without singing her hair, or melting her pomatum! Perhaps when the first surprize was over, she might then grow familiar with danger; and the ladies might vie with each other in standing fire with intrepidity.

But of all the wonders of the East, the most useful, and, I should fancy, the most pleasing, would be the looking glass of Lao, which reflects the mind as well as the body. It is said that the Emperor Chusi used to make his concubines dress their heads and their hearts in one of these glasses every morning; while the lady was at her toilet, he would frequently look over her shoulder; and it is recorded, that among the three hundred which composed his seraglio, not

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one was found whoſe mind was not even more beautiful than her perſon.

I make no doubt but a glaſs in this country would have the very ſame effect. The Engliſh ladies, concubines and all, would undoubtedly cut very pretty figures in ſo faithful a monitor. There, ſhould we happen to peep over a lady's ſhoulder while dreſſing, we might be able to ſee neither gaming nor ill-nature; neither pride, debauchery, nor a love of gadding. We ſhould find her, if any ſenſible defect appeared in the mind, more careful in rectifying it, than plaiſtering up the irreparable decays of the perſon; nay, I am even apt to fancy, that ladies would find more real pleaſure in this utenſil in private, than in any other bauble imported from China, though never ſo expenſive or amuſing.

LETTER XLVI.

TO THE SAME.

UPON finiſhing my laſt letter I retired to reſt, reflecting upon the wonders of the glaſs of Lao, wiſhing to be poſſeſſed of one here, and reſolved in ſuch a caſe to oblige every lady with a ſight of it for nothing. What fortune denied me waking, fancy ſupplied in a dream: the glaſs, I know not how, was put into my poſſeſſion, and I could perceive ſeveral ladies approaching, ſome voluntarily, others driven forward againſt their wills by a ſet of diſcontented Genii, whom by intuition I knew were their huſbands.

The apartment in which I was to ſhow away was filled with ſeveral gaming-tables, as if juſt forſaken; the candles were burnt to the ſocket, and the hour was five o'clock in the morning. Placed at one end of the room, which was of prodigious length, I could more eaſily diſtinguiſh every female figure as ſhe marched up from the door; but gueſs my ſurprize, when I could ſcarce perceive one blooming or agreeable face among the number. This, however, I attributed to the early hour, and kindly conſidered that the face of a lady juſt riſen from bed ought always to find a compaſſionate advocate.

The firſt perſon who came up in order to view her intellectual face, was a commoner's wife, who, as I afterwards found, being bred up during her virginity in a pawn-broker's ſhop, now attempted to make up the defects of breeding and ſentiment, by the magnificence of her dreſs, and the expenſiveneſs of her amuſements. 'Mr. Showman,' cried ſhe, approaching, 'I am told you '*has* ſomething to ſhew in *that there* 'ſort of magic lanthorn, by which 'folks can ſee themſelves on the inſide; 'I proteſt, as my Lord Beetle ſays, I 'am ſure it will be vaſtly pretty, for I 'have never ſeen any thing like it before. But how; are we to ſtrip off our 'cloaths, and be turned inſide out? If 'ſo, as Lord Beetle ſays, I abſolutely 'declare off; for I would not ſtrip for 'the world before a man's face, and 'ſo I *tells* his lordſhip almoſt every 'night of my life.' I informed the lady that I would diſpenſe with the ceremony of ſtripping, and immediately preſented my glaſs to her view.

As when a firſt-rate beauty, after having with difficulty eſcaped the ſmall-pox, reviſits her favourite mirrour; that mirrour which had repeated the flattery of every lover, and even added force to the complement; expecting to ſee what had ſo often given her pleaſure, ſhe no longer beholds the cherried lip, the poliſhed forehead, and ſpeaking bluſh, but an hateful phyz, quilted into a thouſand ſeams by the hand of Deformity; grief, reſentment, and rage, fill her boſom by turns; ſhe blames the Fates and the ſtars, but moſt of all the unhappy glaſs feels her reſentment. So it was with the lady in queſtion; ſhe had never ſeen her own mind before, and was now ſhocked at it's deformity. One ſingle look was ſufficient to ſatisfy her curioſity. I held up the glaſs to her face, and ſhe ſhut her eyes; no entreaties could prevail upon her to gaze once more! ſhe was even going to ſnatch it from my hands, and break it in a thouſand pieces. I found it was time, therefore, to diſmiſs her as incorrigible, and ſhew away to the next that offered.

This was an unmarried lady, who

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continued in a ſtate of virginity till thirty-ſix, and then admitted a lover when ſhe deſpaired of an huſband. No woman was louder at a revel than ſhe, perfectly free-hearted, and almoſt in every reſpect a man; ſhe underſtood ridicule to perfection, and was once known even to ſally out in order to beat the watch. 'Here, you my dear with the outlandiſh face,' ſaid ſhe, addreſſing me, 'let me take a ſingle peep. Not that I care three damns what figure I may cut in the glaſs of ſuch an old-faſhioned creature; if I am allowed the beauties of the face by people of faſhion, I know the world will be complaiſant enough to toſs me the beauties of the mind into the bargain.' I held my glaſs before her as ſhe deſired, and muſt confeſs, was ſhocked with the reflection. The lady, however, gazed for ſome time with the utmoſt complacency; and at laſt turning to me, with the moſt ſatiſfied ſmile, ſaid, ſhe never could think ſhe had been half ſo handſome.

Upon her diſmiſſion, a lady of diſtinction was reluctantly hauled along to the glaſs by her huſband. In bringing her forward, as he came firſt to the glaſs himſelf, his mind appeared tinctured with immoderate jealouſy, and I was going to reproach him for uſing her with ſuch ſeverity; but when the lady came to preſent herſelf, I immediately retracted; for, alas! it was ſeen that he had but too much reaſon for his ſuſpicions.

The next was a lady who uſually teazed all her acquaintance in deſiring to be told of her faults, and then never mended any. Upon approaching the glaſs, I could readily perceive vanity, affectation, and ſome other ill-looking blots, on her mind; wherefore by my advice ſhe immediately ſet about mending. But I could eaſily find ſhe was not earneſt in the work; for as ſhe repaired them on one ſide, they generally broke out on another. Thus, after three or four attempts, ſhe began to make the ordinary uſe of the glaſs in ſetting her hair.

The company now made room for a woman of learning, who approached with a ſlow pace and a ſolemn countenance, which, for her own ſake, I could wiſh had been cleaner. 'Sir,' cried the lady, flouriſhing her hand, which held a pinch of ſnuff, 'I ſhall be enraptured by having preſented to my view a mind with which I have ſo long ſtudied to be acquainted: but, in order to give the ſex a proper example, I muſt inſiſt, that all the company may be permitted to look over my ſhoulder.' I bowed aſſent, and preſenting the glaſs, ſhewed the lady a mind by no means ſo fair as ſhe had expected to ſee. Ill-nature, ill-placed pride, and ſpleen, were too legible to be miſtaken. Nothing could be more amuſing than the mirth of her female companions who had looked over. They had hated her from the beginning, and now the apartment echoed with an univerſal laugh. Nothing but a fortitude like her's could have withſtood their raillery: ſhe ſtood it, however; and when the burſt was exhauſted, with great tranquillity ſhe aſſured the company, that the whole was a *deceptio viſus*, and that ſhe was too well acquainted with her own mind to believe any falſe repreſentations from another. Thus ſaying, ſhe retired with a ſullen ſatiſfaction, reſolved not to mend her faults, but to write a criticiſm on the mental reflector.

I muſt own, by this time I began myſelf to ſuſpect the fidelity of my mirrour; for as the ladies appeared at leaſt to have the merit of riſing early, ſince they were up at five, I was amazed to find nothing of this good quality pictured upon their minds in the reflection; I was reſolved, therefore, to communicate my ſuſpicions to a lady, whoſe intellectual countenance appeared more fair than any of the reſt, not having above ſeventy-nine ſpots in all, beſides ſlips and foibles. 'I own, young woman,' ſaid I, 'that there are ſome virtues upon that mind of yours; but there is ſtill one which I do not ſee repreſented; I mean that of riſing betimes in the morning; I fancy the glaſs falſe in that particular.' The young lady ſmiled at my ſimplicity; and, with a bluſh, confeſſed, that ſhe and the whole company had been up all night gaming.

By this time all the ladies, except one, had ſeen themſelves ſucceſſively, and diſliked the ſhow, or ſcolded the ſhowman; I was reſolved, however, that ſhe who ſeemed to neglect herſelf, and was neglected by the reſt, ſhould take a view; and going up to a corner of the room, where ſhe ſtill continued ſitting, I preſented my glaſs full in her face. Here it was that I exulted in my ſucceſs; no

no blot, no ſtain, appeared on any part of the faithful mirrour. As when the large unwritten page preſents it's ſnowy ſpotleſs boſom to the writer's hand, ſo appeared the glaſs to my view. 'Here, 'O ye daughters of Engliſh anceſtors,' cried I; 'turn hither, and behold an 'object worthy imitation: look upon 'the mirrour now, and acknowledge 'it's juſtice, and this woman's pre-'eminence!' The ladies obeying the ſummons, came up in a groupe, and looking on, acknowledged there was ſome truth in the picture, as the perſon now repreſented had been deaf, dumb, and a fool from her cradle.

Thus much of my dream I diſtinctly remember; the reſt was filled with chimæras, enchanted caſtles, and flying dragons, as uſual. As you, my dear Fum Hoam, are particularly verſed in the interpretation of thoſe midnight warnings, what pleaſure ſhould I find in your explanation: but that our diſtance prevents; I make no doubt, however, but that from my deſcription you will very much venerate the good qualities of the Engliſh ladies in general, ſince dreams, you know, go always by contraries.

Adieu.

LETTER XLVII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO HINGPO, A SLAVE IN PERSIA*.

YOUR laſt letters betray a mind ſeemingly fond of wiſdom, yet tempeſted up by a thouſand various paſſions. You would fondly perſuade me that my former leſſons ſtill influence your conduct, and yet your mind ſeems not leſs enſlaved than your body. Knowledge, wiſdom, erudition, arts, and elegance, what are they, but the mere trappings of the mind, if they do not ſerve to encreaſe the happineſs of the poſſeſſor? A mind rightly inſtituted in the ſchool of philoſophy, acquires at once the ſtability of the oak, and the flexibility of the oſier. The trueſt manner of leſſening our agonies, is to ſhrink from their preſſure; is to confeſs that we feel them.

The fortitude of European ſages is but a dream; for where lies the merit in being inſenſible to the ſtrokes of Fortune, or in diſſembling our ſenſibility? If we are inſenſible, that ariſes only from an happy conſtitution; that is a bleſſing previouſly granted by Heaven, and which no art can procure, no inſtitutions improve.

If we diſſemble our feelings, we only artificially endeavour to perſuade others that we enjoy privileges which we actually do not poſſeſs. Thus while we endeavour to appear happy, we feel at once all the pangs of internal miſery, and all the ſelf-reproaching conſciouſneſs of endeavouring to deceive.

I know but of two ſects of philoſophers in the world that have endeavoured to inculcate that fortitude is but an imaginary virtue; I mean the followers of Confucius, and thoſe who profeſs the doctrines of Chriſt. All other ſects teach pride under misfortunes; they alone teach humility. 'Night,' ſays our Chineſe philoſopher, 'not more 'ſurely follows day, than groans and 'tears grow out of pain.' When misfortunes therefore oppreſs, when tyrants threaten, it is our intereſt, it is our duty, to fly even to diſſipation for ſupport, to ſeek redreſs from friendſhip, or ſeek redreſs from that beſt of friends who loved us into being.

Philoſophers, my ſon, have long declaimed againſt the paſſions, as being the ſource of all our miſeries; they are the ſource of all our misfortunes I own; but they are the ſource of our pleaſures too: and every endeavour of our lives, and all the inſtitutions of philoſophy, ſhould tend to this, not to diſſemble an abſence of paſſion, but to repel thoſe which lead to vice, by thoſe which direct to virtue.

The ſoul may be compared to a field of battle, where two armies are ready every moment to encounter; not a ſingle vice but has a more powerful opponent; and not one virtue but may be overborne by a combination of vices. Reaſon guides the bands of either hoſt, nor

* This letter appears to be little more than a rhapſody of ſentiments from Confucius. Vid. the Latin tranſlation.

can it ſubdue one paſſion, but by the aſſiſtance of another. Thus, as a bark on every ſide beſet with ſtorms, enjoys a ſtate of reſt, ſo does the mind, when influenced by a juſt equipoſe of the paſſions, enjoy tranquillity.

I have uſed ſuch means as my little fortune would admit to procure your freedom. I have lately written to the governor of Argun to pay your ranſom, though at the expence of all the wealth I brought with me from China. If we become poor, we ſhall at leaſt have the pleaſure of bearing poverty together; for what is fatigue or famine, when weighed againſt friendſhip and freedom? Adieu.

LETTER XLVIII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO ****, MERCHANT IN AMSTERDAM.

HAPPENING ſome days ago to call at a painter's to amuſe myſelf in examining ſome pictures, (I had no deſign to buy) it ſurprized me to ſee a young prince in the working room, dreſſed in a painter's apron, and aſſiduouſly learning the trade. We inſtantly remembered to have ſeen each other; and, after the uſual compliments, I ſtood by while he continued to paint on. As every thing done by the rich is praiſed, as princes here, as well as in China, are never without followers, three or four perſons, who had the appearance of gentlemen, were placed behind to comfort and applaud him at every ſtroke.

Need I tell, that it ſtruck me with very diſagreeable ſenſations 'to ſee a youth, 'who by his ſtation in life had it in his 'power to be uſeful to thouſands, thus 'letting his mind run to waſte upon 'canvas, at the ſame time fancying him- 'ſelf improving in taſte, and filling his 'rank with proper decorum.'

As ſeeing an error, and attempting to redreſs it, are only one and the ſame with me, I took occaſion, upon his lordſhip's deſiring my opinion of a Chineſe ſcroll, intended for the frame of a picture; to aſſure him, that a mandarine of China thought a minute acquaintance with ſuch mechanical trifles below his dignity.

This reply raiſed the indignation of ſome, and the contempt of others: I could hear the names of Vandal, Goth, taſte, polite arts, delicacy, and fire, repeated in tones of ridicule or reſentment. But conſidering that it was in vain to argue againſt people who had ſo much to ſay, without contradicting them, I begged leave to repeat a fairy tale. This requeſt redoubled their laughter; but not eaſily abaſhed at the raillery of boys, I perſiſted, obſerving that it would ſet the abſurdity of placing our affections upon trifles in the ſtrongeſt point of view; and adding, that it was hoped the moral would compenſate for it's ſtupidity. 'For Heaven's ſake,' cried the great man, waſhing his bruſh in water, 'let us have no morality at 'preſent; if we muſt have a ſtory, let 'it be without any moral.' I pretended not to hear; and while he handled the bruſh, proceeded as follows—

IN the kingdom of Bonbobbin, which, by the Chineſe annal, appears to have flouriſhed twenty thouſand years ago, there reigned a prince endowed with every accompliſhment which generally diſtinguiſhes the ſons of kings. His beauty was brighter than the ſun. The ſun, to which he was nearly related, would ſometimes ſtop his courſe in order to look down and admire him.

His mind was not leſs perfect than his body; he knew all things without having ever read; philoſophers, poets, and hiſtorians, ſubmitted their works to his deciſion; and ſo penetrating was he, that he could tell the merit of a book by looking on the cover. He made epic poems, tragedies, and paſtorals, with ſurpriſing facility; ſong, epigram, or rebus, was all one to him; though it is obſerved he could never finiſh an acroſtic. In ſhort, the fairy, who preſided at his birth, had endowed him with almoſt every perfection; or what was juſt the ſame, his ſubjects were ready to acknowledge he poſſeſſed them all; and, for his own part, he knew nothing to the contrary. A prince ſo accompliſhed, received a name ſuitable to his merit; and

he was called Bonbennin Bonbobbin Bonbobbinet, which ſignifies *Enlightener of the Sun*.

As he was very powerful, and yet unmarried, all the neighbouring kings earneſtly ſought his alliance. Each ſent his daughter, dreſſed out in the moſt magnificent manner, and with the moſt ſumptuous retinue imaginable, in order to allure the prince: ſo that at one time there were ſeen at his court not leſs than ſeven hundred foreign princeſſes, of exquiſite ſentiment and beauty, each alone ſufficient to make ſeven hundred ordinary men happy.

Diſtracted in ſuch a variety, the generous Bonbennin, had he not been obliged by the laws of the empire to make choice of one, would very willingly have married them all, for none underſtood gallantry better. He ſpent numberleſs hours of ſolicitude in endeavouring to determine whom he ſhould chuſe; one lady was poſſeſſed of every perfection, but he diſliked her eyebrows; another was brighter than the morning ſtar, but he diſapproved her fong whang; a third did not lay white enough on her cheek; and a fourth did not ſufficiently blacken her nails. At laſt, after numberleſs diſappointments on the one ſide and the other, he made choice of the incomparable Nanhoa, queen of the ſcarlet dragons.

The preparations for the royal nuptials, or the envy of the diſappointed ladies, need no deſcription; both the one and the other were as great as they could be; the beautiful princeſs was conducted, amidſt admiring multitudes, to the royal couch, where, after being diveſted of every encumbering ornament, ſhe was placed, in expectance of the youthful bridegroom, who did not keep her long in expectation. He came more chearful than the morning, and printing on her lips a burning kiſs, the attendants took this as a proper ſignal to withdraw.

Perhaps I ought to have mentioned in the beginning that, among ſeveral other qualifications, the prince was fond of collecting and breeding mice, which being an harmleſs paſtime, none of his counſellors thought proper to diſſuade him from: he therefore kept a variety of theſe pretty little animals in the moſt beautiful cages, enriched with diamonds, rubies, emeralds, pearls, and other precious ſtones; thus he *innocently* ſpent four hours each day, in contemplating their innocent little paſtimes.

But to proceed. The prince and princeſs were now in bed; one with all the love and expectation, the other with all the modeſty and fear, which is natural to ſuppoſe; both willing, yet afraid to begin; when the prince happening to look towards the outſide of the bed, perceived one of the moſt beautiful animals in the world, a white mouſe with green eyes, playing about the floor, and performing an hundred pretty tricks. He was already maſter of blue mice, red mice, and even white mice with yellow eyes; but a white mouſe with green eyes, was what he long endeavoured to poſſeſs: wherefore leaping from bed with the utmoſt impatience and agility, the youthful prince attempted to ſeize the little charmer, but it was fled in a moment; for, alas! the mouſe was ſent by a diſcontented princeſs, and was itſelf a fairy.

It is impoſſible to deſcribe the agony of the prince upon this occaſion; he ſought round and round every part of the room, even the bed where the princeſs lay was not exempt from the enquiry; he turned the princeſs on one ſide and t'other, ſtripped her quite naked, but no mouſe was to be found; the princeſs herſelf was kind enough to aſſiſt, but ſtill to no purpoſe.

'Alas,' cried the young prince in an agony, 'how unhappy am I to be thus 'diſappointed! never ſure was ſo beau-'tiful an animal ſeen! I would give 'half my kingdom, and my princeſs, to 'him that would find it.' The princeſs, though not much pleaſed with the latter part of his offer, endeavoured to comfort him as well as ſhe could; ſhe let him know that he had an hundred mice already, which ought to be at leaſt ſufficient to ſatisfy any philoſopher like him. Though none of them had green eyes, yet he ſhould learn to thank Heaven that they had eyes. She told him, (for ſhe was a profound moraliſt) that incurable evils muſt be borne, that uſeleſs lamentations were vain, and that man was born to misfortunes; ſhe even entreated him to return to bed, and ſhe would endeavour to lull him on her boſom to repoſe; but ſtill the prince continued inconſolable; and regarding her with a ſtern air, for which his family was remarkable, he vowed never to ſleep in the royal palace, or indulge himſelf in

the innocent pleaſures of matrimony, till he had found the white mouſe with the green eyes.

'Pr'ythee, Col. Leech,' cried his lordſhip, interrupting me, 'how do you 'like that noſe? don't you think there 'is ſomething of the manner of Rem-'brandt in it? A prince in all this agony 'for a white mouſe! O ridiculous!—'Don't you think, Major Vampyre, 'that eye-brow ſtippled very prettily? 'But pray what are the green eyes to 'the purpoſe, except to amuſe children? 'I would give a thouſand guineas to 'lay on the colouring of this cheek 'more ſmoothly. But I aſk pardon: 'Pray, Sir, proceed.'

LETTER XLIX.

FROM THE SAME.

KINGS (continued I) at that time were different from what they are now; they then never engaged their word for any thing which they did not rigorouſly intend to perform. This was the caſe of Bonbennin, who continued all night to lament his misfortunes to the princeſs, who echoed groan for groan. When morning came, he publiſhed an edict, offering half his kingdom, and his princeſs, to the perſon who ſhould catch and bring him the white mouſe with green eyes. The edict was ſcarce publiſhed, when all the traps in the kingdom were baited with cheeſe; numberleſs mice were taken and deſtroyed; but ſtill the much wiſhed for mouſe was not among the number. The privy-council was aſſembled more than once to give their advice; but all their deliberations came to nothing; even though there were two complete vermin-killers and three profeſſed rat-catchers of the number. Frequent addreſſes, as is uſual on extraordinary occaſions, were ſent from all parts of the empire; but though theſe promiſed well, though in them he received an aſſurance, that his faithful ſubjects would aſſiſt in his ſearch with their lives and fortunes, yet, with all their loyalty, they failed when the time came that the mouſe was to be caught.

The prince therefore was reſolved to go himſelf in ſearch, determined never to lie two nights in one place till he had found what he ſought for. Thus quitting his palace without attendants, he ſet out upon his journey, and travelled through many a deſart, and croſſed many a river, high over hills, and down along vales, ſtill reſtleſs, ſtill enquiring wherever he came; but no white mouſe was to be found.

As one day, fatigued with his journey, he was ſhading himſelf from the heat of the mid-day ſun, under the arching branches of a banana tree, meditating on the object of his purſuit, he perceived an old woman, hideouſly deformed, approaching him; by her ſtoop, and the wrinkles of her viſage, ſhe ſeemed at leaſt five hundred years old; and the ſpotted toad was not more freckled than was her ſkin. 'Ah! Prince Bonbennin Bonbobbin 'Bonbobbinet,' cried the fairy, 'what 'has led you ſo many thouſand miles 'from your own kingdom? what is it 'you look for, and what induces you 'to travel into the kingdom of Em-'mets?' The prince, who was exceſſively complaiſant, told her the whole ſtory three times over; for ſhe was hard of hearing. 'Well,' ſays the old fairy, for ſuch ſhe was, 'I promiſe to put you 'in poſſeſſion of the white mouſe with 'green eyes, and that immediately too, 'upon one condition.'—'One condi-'tion!' cried the prince, in a rapture, 'name a thouſand; I ſhall undergo them 'all with pleaſure.'—'Nay,' interrupted the old fairy, 'I aſk but one, and 'that not very mortifying neither; it is 'only that you inſtantly conſent to mar-'ry me.'

It is impoſſible to expreſs the prince's confuſion at this demand; he loved the mouſe, but he deteſted the bride; he heſitated; he deſired time to think upon the propoſal; he would have been glad to conſult his friends on ſuch an occaſion. 'Nay, nay,' cried the odious fairy, 'if you demur, I retract my pro-'miſe; I do not deſire to force my fa-'vours on any man.—Here, you my 'attendants,' cried ſhe, ſtamping with her foot, 'let my machine be driven up; 'Barbacela, Queen of Emmets, is not 'uſed to contemptuous treatment.' She had no ſooner ſpoken, than her fiery

chariot

Corbould del. Heath sculp.

Plate II.

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chariot appeared in the air, drawn by two ſnails; and ſhe was juſt going to ſtep in, when the prince reflected, that now or never was the time to be poſſeſſed of the white mouſe; and quite forgetting his lawful princeſs Nanhoa, falling on his knees, he implored forgiveneſs for having raſhly rejected ſo much beauty. This well-timed compliment inſtantly appeaſed the angry fairy. She affected an hideous leer of approbation; and, taking the young prince by the hand, conducted him to a neighbouring church, where they were married together in a moment. As ſoon as the ceremony was performed, the prince, who was to the laſt degree deſirous of ſeeing his favourite mouſe, reminded the bride of her promiſe. 'To confeſs a truth, 'my prince,' cried ſhe, 'I myſelf am 'that very white mouſe you ſaw on 'your wedding night in the royal apartment. I now therefore give you the 'choice, whether you would have me a 'mouſe by day and a woman by night, 'or a mouſe by night and a woman by 'day.' Though the prince was an excellent caſuiſt, he was quite at a loſs how to determine, but at laſt thought it moſt prudent to have recourſe to a blue cat that had followed him from his own dominions, and frequently amuſed him with it's converſation, and aſſiſted him with it's advice; in fact this cat was no other than the faithful princeſs Nanhoa herſelf, who had ſhared with him all his hardſhips in this diſguiſe.

By her inſtructions, he was determined in his choice; and returning to the old fairy, prudently obſerved, that as ſhe muſt have been ſenſible he had married her *only for the ſake of what ſhe had*, and not for her perſonal qualifications, he thought it would, for ſeveral reaſons, be moſt convenient, if ſhe continued a woman by day, and appeared a mouſe by night.

The old fairy was a good deal mortified at her huſband's want of gallantry, though ſhe was reluctantly obliged to comply; the day was therefore ſpent in the moſt polite amuſements; the gentlemen talked ſmut; the ladies laughed, and were angry. At laſt the happy night drew near; the blue cat ſtill ſtuck by the ſide of it's maſter, and even followed him to the bridal apartment. Barbacela entered the chamber, wearing a train fifteen yards long, ſupported by porcupines, and all over beſet with jewels, which ſerved to render her more deteſtable. She was juſt ſtepping into bed to the prince, forgetting her promiſe, when he inſiſted upon ſeeing her in the ſhape of a mouſe. She had promiſed, and no fairy can break her word; wherefore aſſuming the figure of the moſt beautiful mouſe in the world, ſhe ſkipped and played about with an infinity of amuſement. The prince, in an agony of rapture, was deſirous of ſeeing his pretty playfellow move a ſlow dance about the floor to his own ſinging; he began to ſing, and the mouſe immediately to perform with the moſt perfect knowledge of time, and the fineſt grace and greateſt gravity imaginable: it only began, for Nanhoa, who had long waited for the opportunity in the ſhape of a cat, flew upon it inſtantly without remorſe, and eating it up in the hundredth part of a moment, broke the charm, and then reſumed her natural figure.

The prince now found that he had all along been under the power of enchantment; that his paſſion for the white mouſe was entirely fictitious, and not the genuine complexion of his ſoul; he now ſaw that his earneſtneſs after mice was an illiberal amuſement, and much more becoming a rat-catcher than a prince. All his meanneſſes now ſtared him in the face, he begged the diſcreet princeſs's pardon an hundred times. The princeſs very readily forgave him; and both returning to their palace in Bonbobbin, lived very happily together, and reigned many years with all that wiſdom which, by the ſtory, they appear to have been poſſeſſed of; perfectly convinced, by their former adventures, that—'They who place their affections 'on trifles at firſt for amuſement, will 'find thoſe trifles at laſt become their 'moſt ſerious concern.' Adieu.

LETTER L.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

ASK an Englishman what nation in the world enjoys most freedom, and he immediately answers, his own. Ask him in what that freedom principally consists, and he is instantly silent. This happy pre-eminence does not arise from the people's enjoying a lager share in legislation than elsewhere; for in this particular, several states in Europe excel them; nor does it arise from a greater exemption from taxes, for few countries pay more; it does not proceed from their being restrained by fewer laws, for no people are burthened with so many; nor does it particularly consist in the security of their property, for property is pretty well secured in every polite state of Europe.

How then are the English more free, (for more free they certainly are) than the people of any other country, or under any other form of government whatever? Their freedom consists in their enjoying all the advantages of democracy with this superior prerogative borrowed from monarchy, that—'the severity of their laws may be relaxed without endangering the constitution.'

In a monarchical state, in which the constitution is strongest, the laws may be relaxed without danger; for though the people should be unanimous in the breach of any one in particular, yet still there is an *effective* power superior to the people, capable of enforcing obedience, whenever it may be proper to inculcate the law either towards the support or welfare of the community.

But all those governments, where laws derive their sanction from the *people alone*, transgressions cannot be overlooked without bringing the constitution into danger. They who transgress the law in such a case, are those who prescribe it; by which means it loses not only it's influence, but it's sanction. In every republic the laws must be strong, because the constitution is feeble; they must resemble an Asiatic husband, who is justly jealous, because he knows himself impotent. Thus in Holland, Switzerland, and Genoa, new laws are not frequently enacted, but the old ones are observed with unremitting severity. In such republics therefore the people are slaves to laws of their own making, little less than in unmixed monarchies, where they are slaves to the will of one subject to frailties like themselves.

In England, from a variety of happy accidents, their constitution is just strong enough, or, if you will, monarchical enough, to permit a relaxation of the severity of laws, and yet those laws still to remain sufficiently strong to govern the people. This is the most perfect state of civil liberty, of which we can form any idea; here we see a greater number of laws than in any other country, while the people at the same time obey only such as are *immediately* conducive to the interests of society; several are unnoticed, many unknown; some kept to be revived and enforced upon proper occasions, others left to grow obsolete, even without the necessity of abrogation.

Scarce an Englishman who does not, almost every day of his life, offend with impunity against some express law, and for which, in a certain conjuncture of circumstances, he would not receive punishment. Gaming-houses, preaching at prohibited places, assembled crowds, nocturnal amusements, public shows, and an hundred other instances, are forbid, and frequented. These prohibitions are useful; though it be prudent in their magistrates, and happy for their people, that they are not enforced; and none but the venal or mercenary attempt to enforce them.

The law, in this case, like an indulgent parent, still keeps the rod, though the child is seldom corrected. Were those pardoned offences to rise into enormity, were they likely to obstruct the happiness of society, or endanger the state, it is then that Justice would resume her terrors, and punish those faults she had so often overlooked with indulgence. It is to this ductility of the laws that an Englishman owes the freedom he enjoys superior to others in a more popular government;

vernment; every ſtep therefore the conſtitution takes towards a Democratic form, every diminution of the legal authority is, in fact, a diminution of the ſubjects freedom; but every attempt to render the government more popular, not only impairs natural liberty, but even will, at laſt, diſſolve the political conſtitution.

Every popular government ſeems calculated to laſt only for a time; it grows rigid with age; new laws are multiplying, and the old continue in force; the ſubjects are oppreſſed, burthened with a multiplicity of legal injunctions; there are none from whom to expect redreſs, and nothing but a ſtrong convulſion in the ſtate can vindicate them into former liberty: thus the people of Rome, a few great ones excepted, found more real freedom under their emperors, though tyrants, than they had experienced in the old age of the commonwealth, in which their laws were become numerous and painful; in which new laws were every day enacting, and the old ones executed with rigour. They even refuſed to be reinſtated in their former prerogatives, upon an offer made them to this purpoſe; for they actually found emperors the only means of ſoftening the rigours of their conſtitution.

The conſtitution of England is at preſent poſſeſſed of the ſtrength of it's native oak, and the flexibility of the bending tamariſk; but ſhould the people at any time, with a miſtaken zeal, pant after an imaginary freedom, and fancy that abridging monarchy was encreaſing their privileges, they would be very much miſtaken, ſince every jewel plucked from the crown of majeſty, would only be made uſe of as a bribe to corruption; it might enrich the few who ſhared it among them, but would, in fact, impoveriſh the public.

As the Roman ſenators by ſlow and imperceptible degrees became maſters of the people, yet ſtill flattered them with a ſhew of freedom, while themſelves only were free; ſo is it poſſible for a body of men, while they ſtand up for privileges, to grow into an exuberance of power themſelves, and the public become actually dependent, while ſome of it's individuals only governed.

If then, my friend, there ſhould in this country ever be on the throne a king, who through good-nature or age ſhould give up the ſmalleſt part of his prerogative to the people; if there ſhould come a miniſter of merit and popularity —But I have room for no more.

Adieu.

LETTER LI.

TO THE SAME.

AS I was yeſterday ſeated at breakfaſt over a penſive diſh of tea, my meditations were interrupted by my old friend and companion, who introduced a ſtranger, dreſſed pretty much like himſelf. The gentleman made ſeveral apologies for his viſit, begged of me to impute his intruſion to the ſincerity of his reſpect, and the warmth of his curioſity.

As I am very ſuſpicious of my company, when I find them very civil without any apparent reaſon, I anſwered the ſtranger's careſſes at firſt with reſerve; which my friend perceiving, inſtantly let me into my viſitant's trade and character, aſking Mr. Fudge, whether he had lately publiſhed any thing new? I now conjectured that my gueſt was no other than a bookſeller, and his anſwer confirmed my ſuſpicions.

'Excuſe me, Sir,' ſays he, 'it is not the ſeaſon; books have their time as well as cucumbers. I would no more bring out a new work in ſummer, than I would ſell pork in the dog-days. Nothing in my way goes off in ſummer, except very light goods indeed. A review, a magazine, or a ſeſſions paper, may amuſe a ſummer reader; but all our ſtock of value we reſerve for a ſpring and winter trade.'—'I muſt confeſs, Sir,' ſays I, 'a curioſity to know what you call a valuable ſtock, which can only bear a winter peruſal.'—'Sir,' replied the bookſeller, 'it is not my way to cry up my own goods; but without exaggeration I will venture to ſhew with any of the trade; my books at leaſt have the peculiar advantage of being always new; and it is my way to clear off my old to the trunk-makers every ſeaſon.

'season. I have ten new title-pages 'now about me, which only want books 'to be added to make them the finest 'things in nature. Others may pre- 'tend to direct the vulgar; but that is 'not my way; I always let the vulgar 'direct me; wherever popular clamour 'arises, I always echo the million. For 'instance, should the people in general 'say that such a man is a rogue, I in- 'stantly give orders to set him down in 'print a villain: thus every man buys 'the book, not to learn new sentiments, 'but to have the pleasure of seeing his 'own reflected.'—'But, Sir,' inter- rupted I, 'you speak as if you yourself 'wrote the books you publish; may I 'be so bold as to ask a sight of some of 'those intended publications which are 'shortly to surprize the world?'—'As 'to that, Sir,' replied the talkative bookseller, 'I only draw out the plans 'myself; and though I am very cau- 'tious of communicating them to any, 'yet, as in the end I have a favour to 'ask, you shall see a few of them. 'Here, Sir, here they are; diamonds 'of the first water, I assure you. *Im- 'primis*, a Translation of several Me- 'dical Precepts for the Use of such Phy- 'sicians as do not understand Latin. '*Item*, the Young Clergyman's Art of 'placing Patches regularly, with a Dis- 'sertation on the different Manner of 'Smiling without distorting the Face. '*Item*, the Whole Art of Love made 'perfectly Easy, by a Broker of 'Change 'Alley. *Item*, the Proper Manner of 'cutting Black Lead Pencils, and mak- 'ing Crayons, by the Right Hon. the 'Earl of ****. *Item*, the Muster Ma- 'ster General, or the Review of Re- 'views—' 'Sir, cried I, interrupting him, 'my curiosity with regard to title- 'pages is satisfied; I should be glad 'to see some longer manuscript; an 'history, or an epic poem.'—'Bless 'me,' cries the man of industry, 'now 'you speak of an epic poem, you 'shall see an excellent farce. Here it 'is; dip into it where you will, it will 'be found replete with true modern hu- 'mour. Strokes, Sir; it is filled with 'strokes of wit and satire in every line.' —'Do you call these dashes of the pen 'strokes,' replied I, 'for I must confess 'I can' see no other?'—'And pray, 'Sir,' returned he, 'what do you call 'them? Do you see any thing good 'now-a-days that is not filled with 'strokes—and dashes?'——Sir, a well 'placed dash makes half the wit of our 'writers of modern humour. I bought 'last season a piece that had no other 'merit upon earth than nine hundred 'and ninety-five breaks, seventy-two 'ha ha's, three good things, and a 'garter. And yet it played off, and 'bounced, and cracked, and made 'more sport than a fire-work.'—'I 'fancy then, Sir, you were a consider- 'able gainer?'—'It must be owned the 'piece did pay; but upon the whole I 'cannot much boast of last winter's suc- 'cess; I gained by two murders; but 'then I lost by an ill-timed charity ser- 'mon. I was a considerable sufferer 'by my Direct Road to an Estate; but 'the Infernal Guide brought me up 'again. Ah, Sir, that was a piece 'touched off by the hand of a master, 'filled with good things from one end 'to the other. The author had nothing 'but the jest in view; no dull moral 'lurking beneath, nor ill-natured sa- 'tire to sour the reader's good humour; 'he wisely considered that moral and 'humour, at the same time, were quite 'over-doing the business.'—'To what 'purpose was the book then published?' cried I. 'Sir, the book was published 'in order to be sold; and no book sold 'better, except the criticisms upon it, 'which came out soon after. Of all 'kinds of writings, that goes off best at 'present; and I generally fasten a cri- 'ticism upon every selling book that is 'published.

'I once had an author who never left 'the least opening for the critics; close 'was the word; always very right, and 'very dull; ever on the safe side of an 'argument; yet, with all his qualifica- 'tions, incapable of coming into fa- 'vour. I soon perceived that his bent 'was for criticism; and as he was good 'for nothing else, supplied him with 'pens and paper, and planted him at 'the beginning of every month as a 'censor on the works of others. In 'short, I found him a treasure; no me- 'rit could escape him: but what is most 'remarkable of all, he ever wrote best 'and bitterest when drunk.'—'But are 'there not some works,' interrupted I, 'that, from the very manner of their 'composition, must be exempted from 'criticism; particularly such as profess 'to disregard it's laws?'—'There is 'no work whatsoever but he can criti- 'cise.'

ciſe,' replied the bookſeller; 'even though you wrote in Chineſe he would have a pluck at you. Suppoſe you ſhould take it into your head to publiſh a book, let it be a volume of Chineſe letters, for inſtance; write how you will, he ſhall ſhew the world you could have written better. Should you, with the moſt local exactneſs, ſtick to the manners and cuſtoms of the country from whence you come; ſhould you confine yourſelf to the narrow limits of Eaſtern knowledge, and be perfectly ſimple, and perfectly natural, he has then the ſtrongeſt reaſon to exclaim. He may with a ſneer ſend you back to China for readers. He may obſerve, that after the firſt or ſecond letter the iteration of the ſame ſimplicity is inſupportably tedious; but the worſt of all is, the public in ſuch a caſe will anticipate his cenſures, and leave you, with all your uninſtructive ſimplicity, to be mauled at diſcretion.'

'Yes,' cried I; 'but, in order to avoid his indignation, and what I ſhould fear more, that of the public, I would, in ſuch a caſe, write with all the knowledge I was maſter of. As I am not poſſeſſed of much learning, at leaſt I would not ſuppreſs what little I had; nor would I appear more ſtupid than Nature made me.'—'Here then,' cries the bookſeller, 'we ſhould have you entirely in our power: "Unnatural, uneaſtern; quite out of character; erroneouſly ſenſible;" would be the whole cry. Sir, we ſhould then hunt you down like a rat.'—'Head of my father!' ſaid I, 'ſure there are but the two ways; the door muſt either be ſhut, or it muſt be open. I muſt either be natural or unnatural.'—'Be what you will, we ſhall criticiſe you,' returned the bookſeller, 'and prove you a dunce in ſpite of your teeth. But, Sir, it is time that I ſhould come to buſineſs. I have juſt now in the preſs an hiſtory of China; and, if you will but put your name to it as the author, I ſhall repay the obligation with gratitude.'—'What, Sir,' replied I, 'put my name to a work which I have not written! Never while I retain a proper reſpect for the public and myſelf.' The bluntneſs of my reply quite abated the ardour of the bookſeller's converſation; and, after about half an hour's diſagreeable reſerve, he, with ſome ceremony, took his leave and withdrew. Adieu.

LETTER LII.

TO THE SAME.

IN all other countries, my dear Fum Hoam, the rich are diſtinguiſhed by their dreſs. In Perſia, China, and moſt parts of Europe, thoſe who are poſſeſſed of much gold or ſilver, put ſome of it upon their cloaths; but in England, thoſe who carry much upon their cloaths, are remarked for having but little in their pockets. A tawdry outſide is regarded as a badge of poverty; and thoſe who can ſit at home; and glote over their thouſands in ſilent ſatisfaction, are generally found to do it in plain cloaths.

This diverſity of thinking from the reſt of the world which prevails here, I was firſt at a loſs to account for; but am ſince informed that it was introduced by an intercourſe between them and their neighbours the French; who, whenever they came in order to pay thoſe iſlanders a viſit, were generally very well dreſſed, and very poor, daubed with lace, but all the gilding on the outſide. By this means laced cloaths have been brought ſo much into contempt, that at preſent even their mandarines are aſhamed of finery.

I muſt own myſelf a convert to Engliſh ſimplicity; I am no more for oſtentation of wealth than of learning; the perſon who in company ſhould pretend to be wiſer than others, I am apt to regard as illiterate and ill-bred; the perſon whoſe cloaths are extremely fine, I am too apt to conſider as not being poſſeſſed of any ſuperiority of fortune, but reſembling thoſe Indians who are found to wear all the gold they have in the world in a bob at the noſe.

I was lately introduced into a company of the beſt dreſſed men I have ſeen ſince my arrival. Upon entering the room, I was ſtruck with awe at the grandeur of the different dreſſes. 'That perſonage,' thought I, 'in blue and gold, muſt be ſome emperor's ſon; that, in green and ſilver, a prince of

'the blood; he, in embroidered ſcarlet, 'a prime miniſter; all firſt rate noblemen, I ſuppoſe, and well looking noblemen too.' I ſate for ſome time with that uneaſineſs which conſcious inferiority produces in the ingenuous mind, all attention to their diſcourſe. However, I found their converſation more vulgar than I could have expected from perſonages of ſuch diſtinction. 'If theſe,' thought I to myſelf, 'be princes, they are the moſt ſtupid princes I have ever converſed with.' Yet ſtill I continued to venerate their dreſs; for dreſs has a kind of mechanical influence on the mind.

My friend in black indeed did not behave with the ſame deference, but contradicted the fineſt of them all in the moſt peremptory tones of contempt. But I had ſcarce time to wonder at the imprudence of his conduct, when I found occaſion to be equally ſurprized at the abſurdity of theirs; for, upon the entry of a middle-aged man, dreſſed in a cap, dirty ſhirt, and boots, the whole circle ſeemed diminiſhed of their former importance, and contended who ſhould be firſt to pay their obeiſance to the ſtranger. They ſomewhat reſembled a circle of Kalmucs offering incenſe to a bear.

Eager to know the cauſe of ſo much ſeeming contradiction, I whiſpered my friend out of the room, and found that the auguſt company conſiſted of no other than a dancing-maſter, two fiddlers, and a third-rate actor, all aſſembled in order to make a ſet at country-dances; as the middle-aged gentleman whom I ſaw enter was a ſquire from the country, and deſirous of learning the new manner of footing, and ſmoothing up the rudiments of his rural minuet.

I was no longer ſurprized at the authority which my friend aſſumed among them; nay, was even diſpleaſed (pardon my Eaſtern education) that he had not kicked every creature of them down ſtairs. 'What,' ſaid I, 'ſhall a ſet of ſuch paltry fellows dreſs themſelves up like ſons of kings, and claim even the tranſitory reſpect of half an hour! There ſhould be ſome law to reſtrain ſo manifeſt a breach of privilege; they ſhould go from houſe to houſe, as in China, with the inſtruments of their profeſſion ſtrung round their necks; by this means we might be able to diſtinguiſh, and treat them in a ſtile of becoming contempt.'—'Hold, my friend,' replied my companion, 'were your reformation to take place, as dancing-maſters and fiddlers now mimic gentlemen in appearance, we ſhould then find our fine gentlemen conforming to theirs. A beau might be introduced to a lady of faſhion with a fiddle-caſe hanging at his neck by a red ribband; and, inſtead of a cane, might carry a fiddle-ſtick. Though to be as dull as a firſt-rate dancing-maſter might be uſed with proverbial juſtice; yet, dull as he is, many a fine gentleman ſets him up as the proper ſtandard of politeneſs; copies not only the pert vivacity of his air, but the flat inſipidity of his converſation. In ſhort, if you make a law againſt dancing-maſters imitating the fine gentleman, you ſhould with as much reaſon enact, that no fine gentleman ſhall imitate the dancing-maſter.'

After I had left my friend, I made towards home, reflecting as I went upon the difficulty of diſtinguiſhing men by their appearance. Invited, however, by the freſhneſs of the evening, I did not return directly, but went to ruminate on what had paſſed in a public garden belonging to the city. Here, as I ſate upon one of the benches, and felt the pleaſing ſympathy which Nature in bloom inſpires, a diſconſolate figure, who ſat on the other end of the ſeat, ſeemed no way to enjoy the ſerenity of the ſeaſon.

His dreſs was miſerable beyond deſcription; a thread-bare coat of the rudeſt materials; a ſhirt, though clean, yet extremely coarſe; hair that ſeemed to have been long unconſcious of the comb; and all the reſt of his equipage impreſſed with the marks of genuine poverty.

As he continued to ſigh, and teſtify every ſymptom of deſpair, I was naturally led, from a motive of humanity, to offer comfort and aſſiſtance. You know my heart; and that all who are miſerable may claim a place there. The penſive ſtranger at firſt declined any converſation; but at laſt, perceiving a peculiarity in my accent and manner of thinking, he began to unfold himſelf by degrees.

I now found that he was not ſo very miſerable as he at firſt appeared; upon my offering him a ſmall piece of money, he refuſed my favour, yet without appearing diſpleaſed at my intended generoſity.

rosity. It is true, he sometimes interrupted the conversation with a sigh, and talked pathetically of neglected merit; still I could perceive a serenity in his countenance that, upon a closer inspection, bespoke inward content.

Upon a pause in the conversation I was going to take my leave, when he begged I would favour him with my company home to supper. I was surprized at such a demand from a person of his appearance, but willing to indulge curiosity, I accepted his invitation; and though I felt some repugnance at being seen with one who appeared so very wretched, went along with seeming alacrity.

Still, as he approached nearer home, his good humour proportionably seemed to encrease. At last he stopped, not at the gate of an hovel, but of a magnificent palace! When I cast my eyes upon all the sumptuous elegance which every where presented upon entering, and then when I looked at my seeming miserable conductor, I could scarce think that all this finery belonged to him; yet in fact it did. Numerous servants ran through the apartments with silent assiduity; several ladies of beauty, and magnificently dressed, came to welcome his return; a most elegant supper was provided; in short, I found the person, whom a little before I had sincerely pitied, to be in reality a most refined epicure; 'one who courted contempt abroad, in order to feel with keener gust the pleasure of pre-eminence at home.'

Adieu.

LETTER LIII.

FROM THE SAME.

HOW often have we admired the eloquence of Europe! That strength of thinking, that delicacy of imagination, even beyond the efforts of the Chinese themselves! How were we enraptured with those bold figures which sent every sentiment with force to the heart! How have we spent whole days together in learning those arts by which European writers got within the passions, and led the reader as if by enchantment!

But though we have learned most of the rhetorical figures of the last age, yet there seems to be one or two of great use here, which have not yet travelled to China. The figures I mean are called *Bawdy* and *Pertness*; none are more fashionable; none so sure of admirers: they are of such a nature, that the merest blockhead, by a proper use of them, shall have the reputation of a wit; they lie level in the meanest capacities, and address those passions which all have, or would be ashamed to disown.

It has been observed, and I believe with some truth, that it is very difficult for a dunce to obtain the reputation of a wit; yet, by the assistance of the figure *Bawdy*, this may be easily effected, and a bawdy blockhead often passes for a fellow of smart parts and pretensions. Every object in nature helps the jokes forward, without scarce any effort of the imagination. If a lady stands, something very good may be said upon that; if she happens to fall, with the help of a little fashionable Pruriency, there are forty sly things ready on the occasion. But a prurient jest has always been found to give most pleasure to a few old gentlemen, who, being in some measure dead to other sensations, feel the force of the allusion with double violence on the organs of risibility.

An author who writes in this manner is generally sure, therefore, of having the very old and the impotent among his admirers; for these he may properly be said to write, and from these he ought to expect his reward, his works being often a very proper succedaneum to cantharides, or an assafoetida pill. His pen should be considered in the same light as the squirt of an apothecary, both being directed at the same generous end.

But though this manner of writing be perfectly adapted to the taste of gentlemen and ladies of fashion here, yet still it deserves greater praise in being equally suited to the most vulgar apprehensions. The very ladies and gentlemen of Benin, or Caffraria, are in this respect tolerably polite, and might relish a prurient joke of this kind with critical

propriety; probably, too, with higher gust, as they wear neither breeches nor petticoats to intercept the application.

It is certain, I never could have expected the ladies here, biassed as they are by education, capable at once of bravely throwing off their prejudices, and not only applauding books in which this figure makes the only merit, but even adopting it in their own conversation. Yet, so it is; the pretty innocents now carry those books openly in their hands, which formerly were hid under the cushion; they now lisp their double meanings with so much grace, and talk over the raptures they bestow with such little reserve, that I am sometimes reminded of a custom among the entertainers in China, who think it a piece of necessary breeding to whet the appetites of their guests, by letting them smell dinner in the kitchen before it is served up to table.

The veneration we have for many things, entirely proceeds from their being carefully concealed. Were the idolatrous Tartar permitted to lift the veil which keeps his idol from view, it might be a certain method to cure his future superstition: with what a noble spirit of freedom, therefore, must that writer be possessed, who bravely paints things as they are, who lifts the veil of modesty, who displays the most hidden recesses of the temple, and shews the erring people that the object of their vows is either perhaps a mouse, or a monkey!

However, though this figure be at present so much in fashion; though the professors of it are so much caressed by the great, those perfect judges of literary excellence; yet it is confessed to be only a revival of what was once fashionable here before. There was a time, when by this very manner of writing, the gentle Tom Durfey, as I read in English authors, acquired his great reputation, and became the favourite of a king.

The works of this original genius, though they never travelled abroad to China, and scarce have reached posterity at home, were once found upon every fashionable toilet, and made the subject of polite, I mean very polite, conversation. 'Has your Grace seen Mr. Durfey's last new thing, the Oylet Hole? 'A most facetious piece! Sure, my 'Lord, all the world must have seen it; 'Durfey is certainly the most comical 'creature alive. It is impossible to read 'his things and live. Was there ever 'any thing so natural and pretty, as 'when the Squire and Bridget meet in the 'cellar? And then the difficulties they 'both find in broaching the beer-barrel 'are so arch and so ingenious! We have 'certainly nothing of this kind in the 'language.'

In this manner they spoke then, and in this manner they speak now; for though the successor of Durfey does not excel him in wit, the world must confess he out-does him in obscenity.

There are several very dull fellows, who, by a few mechanical helps, sometimes learn to become extremely brilliant and pleasing, with a little dexterity in the management of the eye-brows, fingers, and nose. By imitating a cat, a sow and pigs; by a loud laugh, and a slap on the shoulder, the most ignorant are furnished out for conversation. But the writer finds it impossible to throw his winks, his shrugs, or his attitudes, upon paper; he may borrow some assistance, indeed, by printing his face at the title-page; but without wit to pass for a man of ingenuity, no other mechanical help but downright obscenity will suffice. By speaking to some peculiar sensations, we are always sure of exciting laughter, for the jest does not lie in the writer, but in the subject.

But Bawdry is often helped on by another figure, called Pertness; and few, indeed, are found to excel in one, that are not possessed of the other.

As in common conversation, the best way to make the audience laugh, is by first laughing yourself; so in writing, the properest manner is to shew an attempt at humour, which will pass upon most for humour in reality. To effect this, readers must be treated with the most perfect familiarity: in one page the author is to make them a low bow, and in the next to pull them by the nose: he must talk in riddles, and then send them to bed in order to dream for the solution. He must speak of himself and his chapters, and his manner, and what he would be at, and his own importance, and his mother's importance, with the most unpitying prolixity: now and then testifying his contempt for all but himself, smiling without a jest, and without wit possessing vivacity. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER LIV.

FROM THE SAME.

THOUGH naturally penſive, yet I am fond of gay company, and take every opportunity of thus diſmiſſing the mind from duty. From this motive I am often found in the centre of a crowd; and wherever pleaſure is to be ſold, am always a purchaſer. In thoſe places, without being remarked by any, I join in whatever goes forward, work my paſſions into a ſimilitude of frivolous earneſtneſs, ſhout as they ſhout, and condemn as they happen to diſapprove. A mind thus ſunk for a while below it's natural ſtandard, is qualified for ſtronger flights, as thoſe firſt retire who would ſpring forward with greater vigour.

Attracted by the ſerenity of the evening, my friend and I lately went to gaze upon the company in one of the public walks near the city. Here we ſauntered together for ſome time, either praiſing the beauty of ſuch as were handſome, or the dreſſes of ſuch as had nothing elſe to recommend them. We had gone thus deliberately forward for ſome time, when ſtopping on a ſudden, my friend caught me by the elbow, and led me out of the public walk; I could perceive by the quickneſs of his pace, and his frequently looking behind, that he was attempting to avoid ſomebody who followed; we now turned to the right, then to the left; as we went forward he ſtill went faſter, but in vain; the perſon whom he attempted to eſcape, hunted us through every doubling, and gained upon us each moment; ſo that at laſt we fairly ſtood ſtill, reſolving to face what we could not avoid.

Our purſuer ſoon came up, and joined us with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance. 'My dear Drybone,' cries he, ſhaking my friend's hand, 'where have you been hiding this half 'a century? Poſitively I had fancied 'you were gone down to cultivate ma'trimony and your eſtate in the coun'try.' During the reply, I had an opportunity of ſurveying the appearance of our new companion; his hat was pinched up with peculiar ſmartneſs; his looks were pale, thin, and ſharp; round his neck he wore a broad black ribband, and in his boſom a buckle ſtudded with glaſs; his coat was trimmed with tarniſhed twiſt; he wore by his ſide a ſword with a black hilt, and his ſtockings of ſilk, though newly waſhed, were grown yellow by long ſervice. I was ſo much engaged with the peculiarity of his dreſs, that I attended only to the latter part of my friend's reply, in which he complimented Mr. Tibbs on the taſte of his cloaths, and the bloom in his countenance. 'Pſha, pſha, Will!' cried the figure, 'no more of that if you love 'me; you know I hate flattery, on my 'ſoul I do; and yet, to be ſure, an in'timacy with the great will improve 'one's appearance, and a courſe of ve'niſon will fatten; and yet, faith, I de'ſpiſe the great as much as you do; but 'there are a great many damn'd honeſt 'fellows among them; and we muſt 'not quarrel with one half, becauſe the 'other wants weeding. If they were 'all ſuch as my Lord Mudler, one of 'the moſt good-natured creatures that 'ever ſqueezed a lemon, I ſhould my'ſelf be among the number of their ad'mirers. I was yeſterday to dine at 'the Dutcheſs of Piccadilly's; my lord 'was there. "Ned," ſays he to me, "Ned," ſays he, "I'll hold gold to "ſilver I can tell where you were "poaching laſt night."—"Poaching, "my lord," ſays I; "faith you have "miſſed already; for I ſtaid at home, "and let the girls poach for me. "That's my way; I take a fine woman "as ſome animals do their prey; ſtand "ſtill, and ſwoop, they fall into my "mouth."

'Ah, Tibbs, thou art an happy fel'low,' cried my companion, with looks of infinite pity; 'I hope your fortune 'is as much improved as your under'ſtanding in ſuch company?'—'Im'proved!' replied the other; 'you ſhall 'know—but let it go no further—a 'great ſecret—five hundred a year to 'begin with.—My lord's word of ho'nour for it.—His lordſhip took me 'down in his own chariot yeſterday,

'and

'and we had a tete-a-tete dinner in the 'country; where we talked of nothing 'else.'—'I fancy you forget, Sir,' cried I, 'you told us but this moment 'of your dining yesterday in town!'——'Did I say so?' replied he, coolly; 'to be sure, if I said so, it was so—'Dined in town! Egad, now I do remember, I did dine in town; but I dined in the country too; for you must 'know, my boys, I eat two dinners. 'By the bye, I am grown as nice as 'the devil in my eating. I'll tell you 'a pleasant affair about that: We were 'a select party of us to dine at Lady 'Grogram's, an affected piece, but let 'it go no further; a secret. Well, there 'happened to be no assafœtida in the 'sauce to a turkey; upon which, says 'I, "I'll hold a thousand guineas, and "say done first, that——" But, dear 'Drybone, you are an honest creature, 'lend me half-a-crown for a minute or 'two, or so, just till— But, harkee, 'ask me for it the next time we meet, 'or it may be twenty to one but I forget to pay you.'

When he left us, our conversation naturally turned upon so extraordinary a character. 'His very dress,' cries my friend, 'is not less extraordinary 'than his conduct. If you meet him 'this day, you find him in rags; if the 'next, in embroidery. With those persons of distinction, of whom he talks 'so familiarly, he has scarce a coffee-house acquaintance. However, both 'for interests of society, and perhaps 'for his own, Heaven has made him 'poor; and while all the world perceive 'his wants, he fancies them concealed 'from every eye. An agreeable companion, because he understands flattery; and all must be pleased with the 'first part of his conversation, though 'all are sure of it's ending with a demand on their purse. While his youth 'countenances the levity of his conduct, 'he may thus earn a precarious subsistence; but when age comes on, the 'gravity of which is incompatible with 'buffoonery, then will he find himself 'forsaken by all. Condemned, in the 'decline of life, to hang upon some rich 'family whom he once despised, there 'to undergo all the ingenuity of studied 'contempt, to be employed only as a 'spy upon the servants, or a bugbear 'to fright the children into obedience.'

Adieu.

LETTER LV.

TO THE SAME.

I Am apt to fancy I have contracted a new acquaintance whom it will be no easy matter to shake off. My little beau yesterday overtook me again in one of the public walks, and slapping me on the shoulder, saluted me with an air of the most perfect familiarity. His dress was the same as usual, except that he had more powder in his hair, wore a dirtier shirt, a pair of temple-spectacles, and his hat under his arm.

As I knew him to be an harmless amusing little thing, I could not return his smiles with any degree of severity; so we walked forward on terms of the utmost intimacy, and in a few minutes discussed all the usual topics preliminary to particular conversation.

The oddities that marked his character, however, soon began to appear; he bowed to several well-dressed persons, who, by their manner of returning the compliment, appeared perfect strangers. At intervals he drew out a pocket-book, seeming to take memorandums before all the company, with much importance and assiduity. In this manner he led me through the length of the whole walk, fretting at his absurdities, and fancying myself laughed at not less than him by every spectator.

When we were got to the end of our procession—'Blast me!' cries he, with an air of vivacity, 'I never saw the Park 'so thin in my life before; there's no 'company at all to-day. Not a single 'face to be seen.'—'No company!' interrupted I, peevishly; 'no company 'where there is such a crowd? why, 'man, there's too much. What are 'the thousands that have been laughing 'at us but company?'—'Lard, my dear,' returned he, with the utmost good humour, 'you seem immensely chagrined; 'but, blast me, when the world laughs 'at me, I laugh at all the world, and

'so

'so we are even. My Lord Trip, Bill 'Squash, the Creolian, and I, some-'times make a party at being ridicu-'lous; and so we say and do a thousand 'things for the joke sake. But I see 'you are grave, and if you are for a 'fine grave sentimental companion, you 'shall dine with me and my wife to-'day, I must insist on't; I'll introduce you to Mrs. Tibbs, a lady of as elegant qualifications as any in nature; she was bred, but that's between ourselves, under the inspection of the Countess of All-night. A charming body of voice, but no more of that, she will give us a song. You shall see my little girl too, Carolina Wilhelma Amelia Tibbs, a sweet pretty creature; I design her for my Lord Drumstick's eldest son, but that's in friendship, let it go no further; she's but six years old, and yet she walks a minuet, and plays on the guittar immensely already. I intend she shall 'be as perfect as possible in every ac-'complishment. In the first place, I'll 'make her a scholar; I'll teach her 'Greek myself, and learn that lan-'guage purposely to instruct her; but 'let that be a secret.'

Thus saying, without waiting for a reply, he took me by the arm and hauled me along. We passed through many dark alleys and winding ways; for, from some motives to me unknown, he seemed to have a particular aversion to every frequented street; at last, however, we got to the door of a dismal looking house in the outlets of the town, where he informed me he chose to reside for the benefit of the air.

We entered the lower door, which ever seemed to lie most hospitably open; and I began to ascend an old and creaking stair-case, when, as he mounted to shew me the way, he demanded, whether I delighted in prospects; to which answering in the affirmative—'Then,' says he, 'I shall shew you one of the 'most charming in the world, out of 'my windows; we shall see the ships 'sailing, and the whole country for 'twenty miles round, tip top, quite high. 'My Lord Swamp would give ten thou-'sand guineas for such a one; but as I 'sometimes pleasantly tell him, I al-'ways love to keep my prospects at 'home, that my friends may see me the 'oftener.'

By this time we were arrived as high as the stairs would permit us to ascend, till we came to what he was facetiously pleased to call the first floor down the chimney; and knocking at the door, a voice from within demanded—'Who's 'there?' My conductor answered, that it was him; but this not satisfying the querist, the voice again repeated the demand: to which he answered louder than before; and now the door was opened by an old woman with cautious reluctance.

When we were got in, he welcomed me to his house with great ceremony; and turning to the old woman, asked where was her lady? 'Good troth,' replied she, in a peculiar dialect, 'she's 'washing your two shirts at the next 'door, because they have taken an oath 'against lending out the tub any longer.' —'My two shirts!' cries he, in a tone that faultered with confusion, 'what 'does the idiot mean!'—'I ken what 'I mean well enough,' replied the other; 'she's washing your twa shirts at the 'next door, because——' 'Fire and 'fury! no more of thy stupid explana-'tions,' cried he; 'go and inform 'her we have got company. Were that 'Scotch hag to be for ever in the fami-'ly, she would never learn politeness, 'nor forget that absurd poisonous ac-'cent of hers, or testify the smallest spe-'cimen of breeding or high life; and 'yet it is very surprizing too, as I had 'her from a parliament man, a friend 'of mine, from the Highlands, one of 'the politest men in the world; but that's 'a secret.'

We waited some time for Mrs. Tibb's arrival, during which interval, I had a full opportunity of surveying the chamber and all it's furniture; which consisted of four chairs with old wrought bottoms, that he assured me were his wife's embroidery; a square table that had been once japanned, a cradle in one corner, a lumbering cabinet in the other; a broken shepherdess, and a mandarine without a head, were stuck over the chimney; and round the walls several paltry, unframed pictures, which, he observed, were all his own drawing: 'What do you think, Sir, of that head 'in the corner, done in the manner of 'Grisoni? there's the true keeping in 'it; it's my own face, and though there 'happens to be no likeness, a countess 'offered me an hundred for it's fellow: 'I refused her; for, hang it, that would 'be mechanical, you know.'

The wife at laſt made her appearance, at once a ſlattern and a coquet; much emaciated, but ſtill carrying the remains of beauty. She made twenty apologies for being ſeen in ſuch odious diſhabille, but hoped to be excuſed, as ſhe had ſtaid out all night at the gardens with the counteſs, who was exceſſively fond of the *horns*.—'And, indeed, my dear,' added ſhe, turning to her huſband, 'his 'lordſhip drank your health in a bum-'per.'—'Poor Jack,' cries he, 'a 'dear good-natured creature, I know 'he loves me; but I hope, my dear, 'you have given orders for dinner? 'You need make no great prepara-'tions neither, there are but three of 'us; ſomething elegant, and little will 'do; a turbot, an ortolan, or a ——' 'Or what do you think, my dear,' interrupts the wife, 'of a nice pretty bit 'of ox cheek, piping hot, and dreſſed 'with a little of my own ſauce?'—'The very thing,' replies he; 'it will 'eat beſt with ſome ſmart bottled beer; 'but be ſure to let's have the ſauce his 'grace was ſo fond of. I hate your 'immenſe loads of meat, that is coun-'try all over; extreme diſguſting to 'thoſe who are in the leaſt acquainted 'with high life.'

By this time my curioſity began to abate, and my appetite to increaſe. The company of fools may at firſt make us ſmile, but at laſt never fails of rendering us melancholy; I therefore pretended to recollect a prior engagement; and after having ſhewn my reſpect to the houſe, according to the faſhion of the Engliſh, by giving the old ſervant a piece of money at the door, I took my leave: Mr. Tibbs aſſuring me that dinner, if I ſtaid, would be ready at leaſt in leſs than two hours.

LETTER LVI.

FROM FUM HOAM, TO ALTANGI, THE DISCONTENTED WANDERER.

THE diſtant ſounds of muſic that catch new ſweetneſs as they vibrate through the long drawn valley, are not more pleaſing to the ear than the tidings of a far diſtant friend.

I have juſt received two hundred of thy letters by the Ruſſian caravan, deſcriptive of the manners of Europe. You have left it to geographers to determine the ſize of their mountains, and extent of their lakes, ſeeming only employed in diſcovering the genius, the government, and diſpoſition, of the people.

In thoſe letters I perceive a journal of the operations of your mind upon whatever occurs, rather than a detail of your travels from one building to another; of your taking a draught of this ruin, or that obeliſk; of paying ſo many Tomans for this commodity, or laying up a proper ſtore for the paſſage of ſome new wilderneſs.

From your accounts of Ruſſia I learn, that this nation is again relaxing into priſtine barbarity, that it's great emperor wanted a life of an hundred years more to bring about his vaſt deſign. A ſavage people may be reſembled to their own foreſts; a few years are ſufficient to clear away the obſtructions to agriculture; but it requires many ere the ground acquires a proper degree of fertility. The Ruſſians, attached to their ancient prejudices, again renew their hatred to ſtrangers, and indulge every former brutal exceſs. So true it is, that the revolutions of wiſdom are ſlow and difficult; the revolutions of folly or ambition precipitate and eaſy. 'We are 'not to be aſtoniſhed,' ſays Confucius*, 'that the wiſe walk more ſlowly in their 'road to virtue, than fools in their paſ-'ſage to vice; ſince paſſion drags us 'along, while wiſdom points out the 'way.'

The German empire, that remnant of the majeſty of ancient Rome, appears from your account on the eve of diſſolution. The members of it's vaſt body want every tie of government to unite them, and ſeem feebly held together only by their reſpect for ancient inſtitution. The very name of country and countrymen, which in other nations makes one of the ſtrongeſt bonds of government, has been here for ſome time laid

* Though this fine maxim be not found in the Latin edition of the morals of Confucius, yet we find it aſcribed to him by Le Compte, Etat preſent de la Chine. Vol. I. p. 342.

aſide,

aside, each of it's inhabitants seeming more proud of being called from the petty state which gives him birth, than by the more well-known title of German.

This government may be regarded in the light of a severe master, and a feeble opponent. The states which are now subject to the laws of the empire, are only watching a proper occasion to fling off the yoke; and those which are become too powerful to be compelled to obedience, now begin to think of dictating in their turn. The struggles in this state are therefore not in order to preserve, but to destroy, the ancient constitution; if one side succeeds, the government must become despotic; if the other, several states will subsist without nominal subordination; but in either case the Germanic constitution will be no more.

Sweden, on the contrary, though now seemingly a strenuous assertor of it's liberties, is probably only hastening on to despotism. Their senators, while they pretend to vindicate the freedom of the people, are only establishing their own independence. The deluded people will, however, at last perceive the miseries of an aristocratical government; they will perceive that the administration of a society of men is ever more painful than that of one only. They will fly from this most oppressive of all forms, where one single member is capable of controuling the whole, to take refuge under the throne which will ever be attentive to their complaints. No people long endure an aristocratical government, when they can apply elsewhere for redress. The lower orders of people may be enslaved for a time by a number of tyrants, but upon the first opportunity they will ever take a refuge in despotism or democracy.

As the Swedes are making concealed approaches to despotism, the French, on the other hand, are imperceptibly vindicating themselves into freedom. When I consider that those parliaments (the members of which are all created by the court, the presidents of which can act only by immediate direction) presume even to mention privileges and freedom, who, till of late, received directions from the throne with implicit humility; when this is considered, I cannot help fancying that the genius of freedom has entered that kingdom in disguise. If they have but three weak monarchs more, successively on the throne, the mask will be laid aside, and the country will certainly once more be free.

When I compare the figure which the Dutch make in Europe, with that they assume in Asia, I am struck with surprize. In Asia, I find them the great lords of all the Indian seas; in Europe, the timid inhabitants of a paltry state. No longer the sons of freedom, but of avarice; no longer assertors of their rights by courage, but by negotiations; fawning on those who insult them, and crouching under the rod of every neighbouring power. Without a friend to save them in distress, and without virtue to save themselves; their government is poor, and their private wealth will serve to invite some neighbouring invader.

I long with impatience for your letters from England, Denmark, Holland, and Italy; yet, why wish for relations which only describe new calamities, which shew that ambition and avarice are equally terrible in every region?

Adieu.

LETTER LVII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

I Have frequently admired the manner of criticising in China, where the learned are assembled in a body to judge of every new publication; to examine the merits of the work without knowing the circumstances of the author, and then to usher it into the world with proper marks of respect or reprobation.

In England there are no such tribunals erected; but if a man thinks proper to be a judge of genius, few will be at the pains to contradict his pretensions. If any chuse to be critics, it is but saying they are critics; and from that time forward they become invested with full power and authority over every caitiff who

who aims at their inſtruction or entertainment.

As almoſt every member of ſociety has by this means a vote in literary tranſactions, it is no way ſurprizing to find the rich leading the way here as in other common concerns of life, to ſee them either bribing the numerous herd of voters by their intereſt, or browbeating them by their authority.

A great man ſays, at his table, that ſuch a book *is no bad thing*. Immediately the praiſe is carried off by five flatterers to be diſperſed at twelve different coffee-houſes, from whence it circulates, ſtill improving as it proceeds, through forty-five houſes, where cheaper liquors are ſold; from thence it is carried away by the honeſt tradeſman to his own fire-ſide, where the applauſe is eagerly caught up by his wife and children, who have been long taught to regard his judgment as the ſtandard of perfection. Thus, when we have traced a wide-extended literary reputation up to it's original ſource, we ſhall find it derived from ſome great man, who has, perhaps, received all his education and Engliſh from a tutor of Berne, or a dancing-maſter of Picardie.

The Engliſh are a people of good ſenſe; and I am the more ſurprized to find them ſwayed in their opinions by men who often, from their very education, are incompetent judges. Men who, being always bred in affluence, ſee the world only on one ſide, are ſurely improper judges of human nature; they may indeed deſcribe a ceremony, a pageant, or a ball; but how can they pretend to dive into the ſecrets of the human heart, who have been nurſed up only in forms, and daily behold nothing but the ſame inſipid adulation ſmiling upon every face? Few of them have been bred in the beſt of ſchools, the ſchool of adverſity; and, by what I can learn, fewer ſtill have been bred in any ſchool at all.

From ſuch a deſcription, one would think that a droning duke, or a dowager dutcheſs, was not poſſeſſed of more juſt pretenſions to taſte than perſons of leſs quality; and yet, whatever the one or the other may write or praiſe, ſhall paſs for perfection, without farther examination. A nobleman has but to take a pen, ink, and paper, write away through three large volumes, and then ſign his name to the title-page; though the whole might have been before more diſguſting than his own rent-roll, yet ſigning his name and title gives value to the deed; title being alone equivalent to taſte, imagination, and genius.

As ſoon as a piece, therefore, is publiſhed, the firſt queſtions are—'Who is 'the author? Does he keep a coach? 'Where lies his eſtate? What ſort of 'a table does he keep?' If he happens to be poor, and unqualified for ſuch a ſcrutiny, he and his works ſink into irremediable obſcurity; and too late he finds, that having fed upon Turtle is a more ready way to fame, than having digeſted Tully.

The poor devil, againſt whom faſhion has ſet it's face, vainly alledges, that he has been bred in every part of Europe where knowledge was to be ſold; that he has grown pale in the ſtudy of nature and himſelf; his works may pleaſe upon the peruſal, but his pretenſions to fame are entirely diſregarded; he is treated like a fiddler, whoſe muſic, though liked, is not much praiſed, becauſe he lives by it; while a gentleman-performer, though the moſt wretched ſcraper alive, throws the audience into raptures. The fiddler, indeed, may in ſuch a caſe conſole himſelf by thinking, that while the other goes off with all the praiſe, he runs away with all the money: but here the parallel drops; for while the nobleman triumphs in unmerited applauſe, the author by profeſſion ſteals off with—*Nothing*.

The poor, therefore, here, who draw their pens auxiliary to the laws of their country, muſt think themſelves very happy if they find, not fame, but forgiveneſs; and yet, they are hardly treated; for, as every country grows more polite, the preſs becomes more uſeful; and writers become more neceſſary, as readers are ſuppoſed to encreaſe. In a poliſhed ſociety, that man, though in rags, who has the power of enforcing virtue from the preſs, is of more real uſe than forty ſtupid brachmans or bonzes, or guebres, though they preached never ſo often, never ſo loud, or never ſo long. That man, though in rags, who is capable of deceiving even indolence into wiſdom, and who profeſſes amuſement while he aims at reformation, is more uſeful in refined ſociety than twenty cardinals with all their ſcarlet, and tricked out in all the fopperies of ſcholaſtic finery.

LETTER LVIII.

TO THE SAME.

As the man in black takes every opportunity of introducing me to ſuch company as may ſerve to indulge my ſpeculative temper, or gratify my curioſity, I was by his influence lately invited to a *viſitation* dinner. To underſtand this term, you muſt know, that it was formerly the cuſtom here for the principal prieſts to go about the country once a year, and examine upon the ſpot, whether thoſe of ſubordinate orders did their duty, or were qualified for the taſk; whether their temples were kept in proper repair, or the laity pleaſed with their adminiſtration.

Though a viſitation of this nature was very uſeful, yet it was found to be extremely troubleſome, and for many reaſons utterly inconvenient; for as the principal prieſts were obliged to attend at court, in order to ſolicit preferment, it was impoſſible they could at the ſame time attend in the country, which was quite out of the road to promotion: if we add to this the gout, which has been time immemorial a clerical diſorder here, together with the bad wine, and ill-dreſſed proviſions that muſt infallibly be ſerved up by the way, it is not ſtrange that the cuſtom has been long diſcontinued. At preſent, therefore, every head of the church, inſtead of going about to viſit his prieſts, is ſatisfied if his prieſts come in a body once a year to viſit him; by this means the duty of half a year is diſpatched in a day. When aſſembled, he aſks each in his turn, how they have behaved, and are liked; upon which, thoſe who have neglected their duty, or are diſagreeable to their congregation, no doubt accuſe themſelves, and tell him all their faults; for which he reprimands them moſt ſeverely.

The thoughts of being introduced into a company of philoſophers and learned men, (for ſuch I conceived them) gave me no ſmall pleaſure; I expected our entertainment would reſemble thoſe ſentimental banquets ſo finely deſcribed by Xenophon and Plato; I was hoping ſome Socrates would be brought in from the door, in order to harangue upon Divine love; but as for eating and drinking, I had prepared myſelf to be diſappointed in that particular. I was apprized, that faſting and temperance were tenets ſtrongly recommended to the profeſſors of Chriſtianity; and I had ſeen the frugality and mortification of the prieſts of the Eaſt: ſo that I expected an entertainment where we ſhould have much reaſoning, and little meat.

Upon being introduced, I confeſs I found no great ſigns of mortification in the faces or perſons of the company. However, I imputed their florid looks to temperance, and their corpulency to a ſedentary way of living. I ſaw ſeveral preparations indeed for dinner, but none for philoſophy. The company ſeemed to gaze upon the table with ſilent expectation; but this I eaſily excuſed. 'Men of wiſdom,' thought I, 'are ever ſlow of ſpeech; they deliver nothing unadviſedly.—"Silence," ſays Confucius,' "is a friend that will never betray." They are now probably inventing maxims, or hard ſayings, for their mutual inſtruction, when ſome one ſhall think proper to begin.'

My curioſity was now wrought up to the higheſt pitch; I impatiently looked round to ſee if any were going to interrupt the mighty pauſe; when, at laſt, one of the company declared, that there was a ſow in his neighbourhood that farrowed fifteen pigs at a litter. This I thought a very prepoſterous beginning: but juſt as another was going to ſecond the remark, dinner was ſerved, which interrupted the converſation for that time.

The appearance of dinner, which conſiſted of a variety of diſhes, ſeemed to diffuſe new chearfulneſs upon every face; ſo that I now expected the philoſophical converſation to begin, as they improved in good-humour. The principal prieſt, however, opened his mouth, with only obſerving, that the veniſon had not been kept enough, though he had given ſtrict orders for having it killed ten days before. 'I fear,' continued

tinued he, 'it will be found to want 'the true heathy flavour; you will 'find nothing of the original wild-'ness in it.' A priest, who sat next him, having smelt it, and wiped his nose—'Ah, my good lord,' cries he, 'you are too modest, it is 'perfectly fine; every body knows that 'nobody understands keeping venison 'with your lordship.'—'Ay, and par-'tridges too,' interrupted another; 'I 'never find them right any where else.' His lordship was going to reply, when a third took off the attention of the company, by recommending the pig as inimitable. 'I fancy, my lord,' continues he, 'it has been smothered in it's 'own blood?'—'If it has been smo-'thered in it's blood,' cried a facetious member, helping himself, 'we'll now 'smother it in egg-sauce.' This poignant piece of humour produced a long loud laugh, which the facetious brother observing, and now that he was in luck, willing to second his blow, assured the company he would tell them a good story about that: 'As good a story,' cries he, bursting into a violent fit of laughter himself, 'as ever you heard 'in your lives. There was a farmer of 'my parish, who used to sup upon wild 'ducks and flummery; so this farmer '——' 'Doctor Marrowfat,' cries his lordship, interrupting him, 'give 'me leave to drink your health.'—'So, 'being fond of wild ducks and flumme-'ry——' 'Doctor,' adds a gentleman who sat next him, 'let me advise to a 'wing of this turkey.'—'So this far-'mer being fond——' 'Hob nob, doc-'tor, which do you chuse, white or 'red?'—'So being fond of wild ducks 'and flummery——' 'Take care of 'your band, Sir, it may dip in the gravy.' The doctor, now looking round, found not a single *eye* disposed to listen; wherefore, calling for a glass of wine, he gulped down the disappointment and the tale in a bumper.

The conversation now began to be little more than a rhapsody of exclamations; as each had pretty well satisfied his own appetite, he now found sufficient time to press others. 'Excellent! 'the very thing! let me recommend the 'pig; do but taste the bacon! never 'eat a better thing in my life; exqui-'site! delicious!' This edifying discourse continued through three courses, which lasted as many hours, till every one of the company were unable to swallow or utter any thing more.

It is very natural for men who are abridged in one excess, to break into some other. The clergy here, particularly those who are advanced in years, think, if they are abstemious with regard to women and wine, they may indulge their other appetites without censure. Thus some are found to rise in the morning only to a consultation with their cook about dinner; and when that has been swallowed, make no other use of their faculties, (if they have any) but to ruminate on the succeeding meal.

A debauch in wine is even more pardonable than this, since one glass insensibly leads on to another, and instead of sateing whets the appetite. The progressive steps to it are chearful and seducing; the grave are animated, the melancholy relieved, and there is even classic authority to countenance the excess. But in eating after nature is once satisfied, every additional morsel brings stupidity and distempers with it, and, as one of their own poets expresses it—

> The soul subsides, and wickedly inclines,
> To seem but mortal, even in sound divines.

Let me suppose, after such a meal as this I have been describing, while all the company are sitting in lethargic silence round the table, grunting under a load of soup, pig, pork, and bacon; let me suppose, I say, some hungry beggar, with looks of want, peeping through one of the windows, and thus addressing the assembly: 'Pr'ythee, pluck 'those napkins from your chins; after 'nature is satisfied, all that you eat ex-'traordinary is my property, and I 'claim it as mine. It was given you 'in order to relieve me, and not to op-'press yourselves. How can they com-'fort or instruct others, who can scarce 'feel their own existence, except from 'the unsavoury returns of an ill-digested 'meal? But though neither you nor 'the cushions you sit upon will hear 'me, yet the world regards the ex-'cesses of it's teachers with a prying 'eye, and notes their conduct with 'double severity.' I know no other answer any one of the company could make to such an expostulation, but this: 'Friend, you talk of our losing

'a cha-

'a character, and being disliked by the 'world; well, and supposing all this 'to be true, what then! who cares for 'the world? We'll preach for the 'world, and the world shall pay us for 'preaching, whether we like each other 'or not.'

LETTER LIX.

FROM HINGPO, TO LIEN CHI ALTANGI, BY THE WAY OF MOSCOW.

YOU will probably be pleased to see my letter dated from Terki, a city which lies beyond the bounds of the Persian empire: here, blessed with security, with all that is dear, I double my raptures, by communicating them to you; the mind sympathizing with the freedom of the body, my whole soul is dilated in gratitude, love, and praise.

Yet, were my own happiness all that inspired my present joy, my raptures might justly merit the imputation of self-interest; but when I think that the beautiful Zelis is also free, forgive my triumph, when I boast of having rescued from captivity the most deserving object upon earth.

You remember the reluctance she testified, at being obliged to marry the tyrant she hated. Her compliance at last was only feigned, in order to gain time to try some future means of escape. During the interval between her promise and the intended performance of it, she came undiscovered, one evening, to the place where I generally retired after the fatigues of the day; her appearance was like that of an aerial genius, when it descends to minister comfort to undeserved distress; the mild lustre of her eye served to banish my timidity; her accents were sweeter than the echo of some distant symphony. 'Unhappy stranger,' said she, in the Persian language, 'you 'here perceive one more wretched than 'thyself; all this solemnity of prepara'tion, this elegance of dress, and the 'number of my attendants, serve but to 'encrease my miseries; if you have 'courage to rescue an unhappy woman 'from approaching ruin, and our de'tested tyrant, you may depend upon 'my future gratitude.' I bowed to the ground, and she left me, filled with rapture and astonishment. Night brought me no rest; nor could the ensuing morning calm the anxieties of my mind. I projected a thousand methods for her delivery; but each, when strictly examined, appeared impracticable: in this uncertainty, the evening again arrived, and I placed myself on my former station, in hopes of a repeated visit. After some short expectation, the bright perfection again appeared: I bowed, as before, to the ground; when, raising me up, she observed, that the time was not to be spent in useless ceremony; she observed, that the day following was appointed for the celebration of her nuptials, and that something was to be done that very night for our mutual deliverance. I offered, with the utmost humility, to pursue whatever scheme she should direct; upon which she proposed that instant to scale the garden-wall; adding, that she had prevailed upon a female slave, who was now waiting at the appointed place, to assist her with a ladder.

Pursuant to this information, I led her trembling to the place appointed; but, instead of the slave we expected to see, Mostadad himself was there waiting our arrival; the wretch, in whom we confided, it seems, had betrayed our design to her master, and he now saw the most convincing proofs of her information. He was just going to draw his sabre, when a principle of avarice repressed his fury, and he resolved, after a severe chastisement, to dispose of me to another master; in the mean time ordering me to be confined in the strictest manner, and the next day to receive an hundred blows on the soles of my feet.

When the morning came, I was led out in order to receive the punishment, which, from the severity with which it is generally inflicted upon slaves, is worse even than death.

A trumpet was to be a signal for the solemnization of the nuptials of Zelis, and for the infliction of my punishment. Each ceremony, to me equally dreadful, was just going to begin, when we were informed that a large party of Circassian

Circaſſian Tartars had invaded the town, and were laying all in ruin. Every perſon now thought only of ſaving himſelf; I inſtantly unlooſed the cords with which I was bound, and ſeizing a ſcymetar from one of the ſlaves, who had not courage to reſiſt me, flew to the women's apartment where Zelis was confined, dreſſed out for the intended nuptials. I bade her follow me without delay; and going forward, cut my way through the eunuchs, who made but a faint reſiſtance. The whole city was now a ſcene of conflagration and terror; every perſon was willing to ſave himſelf, unmindful of others. In this confuſion, ſeizing upon two of the fleeteſt courſers in the ſtables of Moſtadad, we fled northward, towards the kingdom of Circaſſia. As there were ſeveral others flying in the ſame manner, we paſſed without notice, and in three days arrived at Teflis, a city that lies in a valley within the boſom of the frowning mountains of Caucaſus.

Here, free from every apprehenſion of danger, we enjoy all thoſe ſatisfactions which are conſiſtent with virtue; though I find my heart, at intervals, give way to unuſual paſſions, yet ſuch is my admiration for my fair companion, that I loſe even tenderneſs in diſtant reſpect. Though her perſon demands particular regard, even among the beauties of Circaſſia, yet is her mind far more lovely. How very different is a woman, who thus has cultivated her underſtanding, and been refined into delicacy of ſentiments, from the daughters of the Eaſt, whoſe education is only formed to improve the perſon, and make them more tempting objects of proſtitution! Adieu.

LETTER LX.

FROM HINGPO, TO LIEN CHI ALTANGI, BY THE WAY OF MOSCOW.

WHEN ſufficiently refreſhed after the fatigues of our precipitate flight, my curioſity, which had been reſtrained by the appearance of immediate danger, now began to revive: I longed to know by what diſtreſsful accidents my fair fugitive became a captive, and could not avoid teſtifying a ſurprize, how ſo much beauty could be involved in the calamities from whence ſhe had been ſo lately reſcued.

'Talk not of perſonal charms,' cried ſhe, with emotion, 'ſince to them I owe 'every misfortune: look round on the 'numberleſs beauties of the country 'where we are, and ſee how Nature has 'poured it's charms upon every face; 'and yet, by this profuſion, Heaven 'would ſeem to ſhew how little it re'gards ſuch a bleſſing, ſince the gift is 'laviſhed upon a nation of proſtitutes.

'I perceive you deſire to know my 'ſtory, and your curioſity is not ſo 'great as my impatience to gratify it: 'I find a pleaſure in telling paſt miſ'fortunes to any; but when my deli'verer is pleaſed with the relation, my 'pleaſure is prompted by duty.

'I* was born in a country far to the 'Weſt, where the men are braver, and 'the women more fair, than thoſe of 'Circaſſia; where the valour of the hero 'is guided by wiſdom, and where deli'cacy of ſentiment points the ſhafts of 'female beauty. I was the only daugh'ter of an officer in the army, the child 'of his age; and, as he uſed fondly to 'expreſs it, the only chain that bound 'him to the world, or made his life 'pleaſing. His ſtation procured him 'an acquaintance with men of greater 'rank of fortune than himſelf, and his 'regard for me induced him to bring 'me into every family where he was ac'quainted. Thus I was early taught 'all the elegancies and faſhionable foi'bles of ſuch as the world calls polite; 'and, though without fortune myſelf, 'was taught to deſpiſe thoſe who lived 'as if they were poor.

'My intercourſe with the great, and 'my affectation of grandeur, procured 'me many lovers: but want of for'tune deterred them all from any other 'views than thoſe of paſſing the pre'ſent moment agreeably, or of meditat-

* This ſtory bears a ſtriking ſimilitude to the real hiſtory of Miſs S——d, who accompanied Lady W——e, in her retreat near Florence, and which the editor had from her own mouth.

'ing

ing my future ruin. In every company I found myſelf addreſſed in a warmer ſtrain of paſſion than other ladies who were ſuperior in point of rank and beauty; and this I imputed to an exceſs of reſpect, which in reality proceeded from very different motives.

'Among the number of ſuch as paid me their addreſſes, was a gentleman, a friend of my father, rather in the decline of life, with nothing remarkable, either in his perſon or addreſs, to recommend him. His age, which was about forty, his fortune, which was moderate, and barely ſufficient to ſupport him, ſerved to throw me off my guard; ſo that I conſidered him as the only ſincere admirer I had.

'Deſigning lovers, in the decline of life, are ever moſt dangerous. Skilled in all the weakneſſes of the ſex, they ſeize each favourable opportunity; and by having leſs paſſion than youthful admirers, have leſs real reſpect, and therefore leſs timidity. This inſidious wretch uſed a thouſand arts to ſucceed in his baſe deſigns, all which I ſaw, but imputed to different views, becauſe I thought it abſurd to believe the real motives.

'As he continued to frequent my father's, the friendſhip between them became every day greater; and at laſt, from the intimacy with which he was received, I was taught to look upon him as a guardian and a friend. Though I never loved, yet I eſteemed him; and this was enough to make me wiſh for an union, for which he ſeemed deſirous, but to which he feigned ſeveral delays; while, in the mean time, from a falſe report of our being married, every other admirer forſook me.

'I was at laſt, however, awakened from the deluſion, by an account of his being juſt married to another young lady with a conſiderable fortune. This was no great mortification to me, as I had always regarded him merely from prudential motives; but it had a very different effect upon my father, who, raſh and paſſionate by nature, and, beſides, ſtimulated by a miſtaken notion of military honour, upbraided his friend in ſuch terms, that a challenge was ſoon given and accepted.

'It was about midnight, when I was awakened by a meſſage from my father, who deſired to ſee me that moment. I roſe with ſome ſurprize; and following the meſſenger, attended only by another ſervant, came to a field not far from the houſe, where I found him, the aſſertor of my honour, my only friend and ſupporter, the tutor and companion of my youth, lying on one ſide covered over with blood, and juſt expiring. No tears ſtreamed down my cheeks, nor ſigh eſcaped from my breaſt, at an object of ſuch terror. I ſat down, and ſupporting his aged head in my lap, gazed upon the ghaſtly viſage with an agony more poignant even than deſpairing madneſs. The ſervants were gone for more aſſiſtance. In this gloomy ſtillneſs of the night, no ſounds were heard but his agonizing reſpirations; no object was preſented but his wounds, which ſtill continued to ſtream. With ſilent anguiſh I hung over his dear face, and with my hands ſtrove to ſtop the blood as it flowed from his wounds; he ſeemed at firſt inſenſible; but at laſt, turning his dying eyes upon me— "My dear, dear child!" cried he; "dear, though you have forgotten your own honour, and ſtained mine, I will yet forgive you; by abandoning virtue, you have undone me and yourſelf, yet take my forgiveneſs with the ſame compaſſion I wiſh Heaven may pity me." He expired. All my ſucceeding happineſs fled with him. Reflecting that I was the cauſe of his death, whom only I loved upon earth; accuſed of betraying the honour of his family with his lateſt breath; conſcious of my own innocence, yet without even a poſſibility of vindicating it; without fortune, or friends to relieve or pity me, abandoned to infamy, and the wide cenſuring world, I called out upon the dead body that lay ſtretched before me, and in the agony of my heart aſked, why he could have left me thus? "Why, my dear, my only papa, why could you ruin me thus, and yourſelf, for ever! O pity, and return, ſince there is none but you to comfort me!"

'I ſoon found that I had real cauſe for ſorrow; that I was to expect no compaſſion from my own ſex, nor aſſiſtance from the other; and that reputation was much more uſeful in our commerce with mankind, than really to deſerve it. Wherever I came, I

'perceived myself received either with 'contempt or detestation; or whenever 'I was civilly treated, it was from the 'most base and ungenerous motives.

'Thus driven from the society of the 'virtuous, I was at last, in order to dis-'pel the anxieties of insupportable so-'litude, obliged to take up with the 'company of those whose characters 'were blasted like my own; but who, 'perhaps, deserved their infamy. A-'mong this number was a lady of the 'first distinction, whose character the 'public thought proper to brand even 'with greater infamy than mine. A 'similitude of distress soon united us: 'I knew that general reproach had 'made her miserable; and I had learn-'ed to regard misery as an excuse for 'guilt. Though this lady had not 'virtue enough to avoid reproach, yet 'she had too much delicate sensibility 'not to feel it. She therefore propos-'ed our leaving the country where we 'were born, and going to live in Italy, 'where our characters and misfortunes 'would be unknown. With this I 'eagerly complied; and we soon found 'ourselves in one of the most charming 'retreats in the most beautiful province 'of that enchanting country.

'Had my companion chosen this as a 'retreat for injured virtue, an harbour 'where we might look with tranquillity 'on the distant angry world, I should 'have been happy; but very different 'was her design; she had pitched upon 'this situation only to enjoy those plea-'sures in private, which she had not 'sufficient effrontery to satisfy in a 'more open manner. A nearer ac-'quaintance soon shewed me the vici-'ous part of her character; her mind, 'as well as her body, seemed formed 'only for pleasure; she was sentimen-'tal only as it served to protract the im-'mediate enjoyment. Formed for so-'ciety alone, she spoke infinitely better 'than she wrote, and wrote infinitely 'better than she lived. A person de-'voted to pleasure, often leads the most 'miserable life imaginable; such was 'her case; she considered the natural 'moments of languor as insupportable, 'passed all her hours between rapture 'and anxiety, ever in an extreme of 'agony or of bliss. She felt a pain as 'sincere for want of appetite, as the 'starving wretch who wants a meal. 'In those intervals she usually kept her 'bed, and rose only when in expecta-'tion of some new enjoyment. The 'luxuriant air of the country, the ro-'mantic situation of her palace, and 'the genius of a people, whose only hap-'piness lies in sensual refinement, all 'contributed to banish the remembrance 'of her native country.

'But though such a life gave her 'pleasure, it had a very different effect 'upon me; I grew every day more pen-'sive, and my melancholy was regard-'ed as an insult upon her good humour. 'I now perceived myself entirely unfit 'for all society; discarded from the 'good, and detesting the infamous, I 'seemed in a state of war with every 'rank of people; that virtue, which 'should have been my protection in the 'world, was here my crime: in short, 'detesting life, I was determined to be-'come a recluse, to leave a world where 'I found no pleasure that could allure 'me to stay. Thus determined, I em-'barked, in order to go by sea to Rome, 'where I intended to take the veil; but, 'even in so short a passage, my hard 'fortune still attended me; our ship 'was taken by a Barbary corsair; the 'whole crew, and I among the num-'ber, being made slaves. It carries 'too much the air of romance, to in-'form you of my distresses or obstinacy 'in this miserable state; it is enough 'to observe, that I have been bought 'by several masters, each of whom per-'ceiving my reluctance, rather than 'use violence, sold me to another, till 'it was my happiness to be at last re-'scued by you.'

Thus ended her relation, which I have abridged; but as soon as we are arrived at Moscow, for which we intend to set out shortly, you shall be informed of all more particularly. In the mean time, the greatest addition to my happiness will be to hear of yours.

Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER LXI.

FROM THE SAME.

THE news of your freedom lifts the load of former anxiety from my mind; I can now think of my son without regret, applaud his resignation under calamities, and his conduct in extricating himself from them.

'You are now free, just let loose 'from the bondage of an hard master.' This is the crisis of your fate; and, as you now manage fortune, succeeding life will be marked with happiness or misery; a few years perseverance in prudence, which at your age is but another name for virtue, will ensure comfort, pleasure, tranquillity, esteem; too eager an enjoyment of every good that now offers, will reverse the medal, and present you with poverty, anxiety, remorse, contempt.

As it has been observed that none are better qualified to give others advice, than those who have taken the least of it themselves; so, in this respect, I find myself perfectly authorized to offer mine, even though I should wave my paternal authority upon this occasion.

The most usual way among young men who have no resolution of their own, is first to ask one friend's advice, and follow it for some time; then to ask advice of another, and turn to that; so of a third, still unsteady, always changing. However, be assured that every change of this nature is for the worse: people may tell you of your being unfit for some peculiar occupations in life; but heed them not; whatever employment you follow with perseverance and assiduity, will be found fit for you; it will be your support in youth, and comfort in age. In learning the useful part of every profession, very moderate abilities will suffice; even if the mind be a little balanced with stupidity, it may in this case be useful. Great abilities have always been less serviceable to the possessors than moderate ones. Life has been compared to a race; but the allusion still improves, by observing, that the most swift are ever the least manageable.

To know one profession only, is enough for one man to know; and this (whatever the professors may tell you to the contrary) is soon learned. Be contented therefore with one good employment; for if you understand two at a time, people will give you business in neither.

A conjurer and a taylor once happened to converse together. 'Alas,' cries the taylor, 'what an unhappy poor 'creature am I! If people should ever 'take it in their heads to live without 'cloaths, I am undone; I have no other 'trade to have recourse to.'—'Indeed, 'friend, I pity you sincerely,' replies the conjurer; 'but, thank Heaven, things 'are not quite so bad with me; for if 'one trick should fail, I have a hun'dred tricks for them yet. However, 'if at any time you are reduced to beg'gary, apply to me, and I will relieve 'you.' A famine overspread the land; the taylor made a shift to live, because his customers could not be without cloaths; but the poor conjurer, with all his hundred tricks, could find none that had money to throw away: it was in vain that he promised to eat fire, or to vomit pins; no single creature would relieve him, till at last he was obliged to beg from the very taylor whose calling he had formerly despised.

There are no obstructions more fatal to fortune than pride and resentment. If you must resent injuries at all, at least suppress your indignation until you become rich, and then shew away: the resentment of a poor man is like the efforts of a harmless insect to sting; it may get him crushed, but cannot defend him. Who values that anger which is consumed only in empty menaces?

Once upon a time a goose fed it's young by a pond side; and a goose, in such circumstances, is always extremely proud, and excessively punctilious. If any other animal, without the least design to offend, happened to pass that way, the goose was immediately at him. The pond, she said, was hers, and she would maintain a right in it, and support her honour, while she had a bill

to hiſs, or a wing to flutter. In this manner ſhe drove away ducks, pigs, and chickens; nay, even the inſidious cat was ſeen to ſcamper. A lounging maſtiff, however, happened to paſs by, and thought it no harm if he ſhould lap a little of the water, as he was thirſty. The guardian gooſe flew at him like a fury, pecked at him with her beak, and ſlapped him with her feathers. The dog grew angry; had twenty times a good mind to give her a ſly ſnap; but ſuppreſſing his indignation, becauſe his maſter was nigh—'A pox take thee,' cries he, 'for a fool; ſure thoſe who 'have neither ſtrength nor weapons to 'fight, at leaſt ſhould be civil; that 'fluttering and hiſſing of thine may one 'day get thine head ſnapt off, but it 'can neither injure thy enemies, or ever 'protect thee.' So ſaying, he went forward to the pond, quenched his thirſt, in ſpite of the gooſe, and followed his maſter.

Another obſtruction to the fortune of youth is, that while they are willing to take offence from none, they are alſo equally deſirous of giving none offence. From hence they endeavour to pleaſe all, comply with every requeſt, attempt to ſuit themſelves to every company; have no will of their own, but like wax catch every contiguous impreſſion. By thus attempting to give univerſal ſatisfaction, they at laſt find themſelves miſerably diſappointed: to bring the generality of admirers on our ſide, it is ſufficient to attempt pleaſing a very few.

A painter of eminence was once reſolved to finiſh a piece which ſhould pleaſe the whole world. When, therefore, he had drawn a picture, in which his utmoſt ſkill was exhauſted, it was expoſed in the public market-place, with directions at the bottom for every ſpectator to mark with a bruſh, which lay by, every limb and feature which ſeemed erroneous. The ſpectators came, and in general applauded; but each, willing to ſhew his talent at criticiſm, marked whatever he thought proper. At evening, when the painter came, he was mortified to find the whole picture one univerſal blot; not a ſingle ſtroke that was not ſtigmatized with marks of diſapprobation. Not ſatisfied with this trial, the next day he was reſolved to try them in a different manner; and expoſing his picture as before, deſired that every ſpectator would mark thoſe beauties he approved or admired. The people complied; and the artiſt returning, found his picture replete with the marks of beauty; every ſtroke that had been yeſterday condemned now received the character of approbation. 'Well,' cries the painter, 'I now find that the 'beſt way to pleaſe one half of the 'world, is not to mind what the other 'half ſays; ſince what are faults in the 'eyes of theſe, ſhall be by thoſe regard'ed as beauties.' Adieu.

LETTER LXII.

FROM THE SAME.

A Character, ſuch as you have repreſented that of your fair companion, which continues virtuous, though loaded with infamy, is truly great. Many regard virtue becauſe it is attended with applauſe; your favourite only for the internal pleaſure it confers. I have often wiſhed that ladies like her were propoſed as models for female imitation, and not ſuch as have acquired fame by qualities repugnant to the natural ſoftneſs of the ſex.

Women famed for their valour, their ſkill in politics, or their learning, leave the duties of their own ſex, in order to invade the privileges of ours. I can no more pardon a fair one for endeavouring to wield the club of Hercules, than I could him for attempting to twirl her diſtaff.

The modeſt virgin, the prudent wife, or the careful matron, are much more ſerviceable in life than petticoated philoſophers, bluſtering heroines, or virago queens. She who makes her huſband and her children happy, who reclaims the one from vice, and trains up the other to virtue, is a much greater character than ladies deſcribed in romance, whoſe whole occupation is to murder mankind with ſhafts from their quiver or their eyes.

Women, it has been obſerved, are not naturally formed for great cares themſelves,

themselves, but to soften ours. Their tenderness is the proper reward for the dangers we undergo for their preservation; and the ease and chearfulness of their conversation, our desirable retreat from the fatigues of intense application. They are confined within the narrow limits of domestic assiduity; and when they stray beyond them, they move beyond their sphere, and consequently without grace.

Fame, therefore, has been very unjustly dispensed among the female sex. Those who least deserved to be remembered, meet our admiration and applause; while many, who have been an honour to humanity, are passed over in silence. Perhaps no age has produced a stronger instance of misplaced fame than the present: the Semiramis and the Thalestris of antiquity are talked of, while a modern character, infinitely greater than either, is unnoticed and unknown.

CATHERINA Alexowna*, born near Derpat, a little city in Livonia, was heir to no other inheritance than the virtues and frugality of her parents. Her father being dead, she lived with her aged mother, in their cottage covered with straw; and both, though very poor, were very contented. Here, retired from the gaze of the world, by the labour of her hands she supported her parent, who was now incapable of supporting herself. While Catherina spun, the old woman would sit by, and read some book of devotion; thus, when the fatigues of the day were over, both would sit down contentedly by their fire-side, and enjoy the frugal meal with vacant festivity.

Though her face and person were models of perfection, yet her whole attention seemed bestowed upon her mind; her mother taught her to read, and an old Lutheran minister instructed her in the maxims and duties of religion. Nature had furnished her not only with a ready but a solid turn of thought; not only with a strong but a right understanding. Such truly female accomplishments procured her several solicitations of marriage from the peasants of the country; but their offers were refused: for she loved her mother too tenderly to think of a separation.

Catherina was fifteen when her mother died; she now therefore left her cottage, and went to live with the Lutheran minister, by whom she had been instructed from her childhood. In his house she resided, in quality of governess to his children; at once reconciling in her character unerring prudence with surprizing vivacity.

The old man, who regarded her as one of his own children, had her instructed in dancing and music, by the masters who attended the rest of his family: thus she continued to improve till he died; by which accident she was once more reduced to pristine poverty. The country of Livonia was at this time wasted by war, and lay in a most miserable state of desolation. Those calamities are ever most heavy upon the poor; wherefore Catherina, though possessed of so many accomplishments, experienced all the miseries of hopeless indigence. Provisions becoming every day more scarce, and her private stock being entirely exhausted, she resolved at last to travel to Marienburgh, a city of greater plenty.

With her scanty wardrobe, packed up in a wallet, she set out on her journey on foot; she was to walk through a region miserable by nature, but rendered still more hideous by the Swedes and Russians, who, as each happened to become masters, plundered it at discretion: but hunger had taught her to despise the dangers and fatigues of the way.

One evening, upon her journey, as she had entered a cottage by the way side, to take up her lodging for the night, she was insulted by two Swedish soldiers, who insisted upon qualifying her, as they termed it, 'to follow the 'camp.' They might probably have carried their insults into violence, had not a subaltern officer, accidentally passing by, come to her assistance. Upon his appearing, the soldiers immediately desisted; but her thankfulness was hardly greater than her surprize, when she instantly recollected in her deliverer the son of the Lutheran minister, her former instructor, benefactor, and friend.

This was a happy interview for Catherina: the little stock of money she had brought from home was by this time quite exhausted; her cloaths were gone, piece by piece, in order to satisfy

* This account seems to be taken from the Manuscript Memoirs of H. Spilman, Esq.

those who had entertained her in their houses; her generous countryman, therefore, parted with what he could spare to buy her cloaths, furnished her with a horse, and gave her letters of recommendation to Mr. Gluck, a faithful friend of his father's, and superintendant of Marienburgh.

Our beautiful stranger had only to appear to be well received; she was imdiately admitted into the superintendant's family, as governess to his two daughters; and, though yet but seventeen, shewed herself capable of instructing her sex, not only in virtue, but politeness. Such was her good sense and beauty, that her master himself, in a short time, offered her his hand; which, to his great surprize, she thought proper to refuse. Actuated by a principle of gratitude, she was resolved to marry her deliverer only, even though he had lost an arm, and was otherwise disfigured by wounds in the service.

In order therefore to prevent further solicitations from others, as soon as the officer came to town upon duty, she offered him her person, which he accepted with transport, and their nuptials were solemnized as usual. But all the lines of her fortune were to be striking: the very day on which they were married, the Russians laid siege to Marienburgh; the unhappy soldier had now no time to enjoy the well-earned pleasures of matrimony; he was called off before consummation to an attack, from which he was never after seen to return.

In the mean time the siege went on with fury, aggravated on one side by obstinacy, on the other by revenge. This war between the two Northern powers at that time was truly barbarous: the innocent peasant, and the harmless virgin, often shared the fate of the soldier in arms. Marienburgh was taken by assault; and such was the fury of the assailants, that not only the garrison, but almost all the inhabitants, men, women, and children, were put to the sword; at length, when the carnage was pretty well over, Catherina was found hid in an oven.

She had been hitherto poor, but still was free; she was now to conform to her hard fate, and learn what it was to be a slave: in this situation, however, she behaved with piety and humility; and though misfortunes had abated her vivacity, yet she was chearful. The fame of her merit and resignation reached even Prince Menzikoff, the Russian general; he desired to see her; was struck with her beauty; bought her from the soldier, her master, and placed her under the direction of his own sister. Here she was treated with all the respect which her merit deserved, while her beauty every day improved with her good fortune.

She had not been long in this situation, when Peter the Great, paying the prince a visit, Catherina happened to come in with some dry fruits, which she served round with peculiar modesty. The mighty monarch saw and was struck with her beauty. He returned the next day, called for the beautiful slave, asked her several questions, and found her understanding even more perfect than her person.

He had been forced, when young, to marry from motives of interest; he was now resolved to marry pursuant to his own inclinations. He immediately enquired the history of the fair Livonian, who was not yet eighteen. He traced her through the vale of obscurity, through all the vicissitudes of her fortune, and found her truly great in them all. The meanness of her birth was no obstruction to his design; their nuptials were solemnized in private; the prince assuring his courtiers, that virtue alone was the properest ladder to a throne.

We now see Catherina, from the low mud-walled cottage, empress of the greatest kingdom upon earth. The poor solitary wanderer is now surrounded by thousands, who find happiness in her smile. She, who formerly wanted a meal, is now capable of diffusing plenty upon whole nations. To her fortune she owed a part of this pre-eminence, but to her virtues more.

She ever after retained those great qualities which first placed her on a throne; and while the extraordinary prince, her husband, laboured for the reformation of his male subjects, she studied, in her turn, the improvement of her own sex. She altered their dresses, introduced mixed assemblies, instituted an order of female knighthood; and at length, when she had greatly filled all the stations of empress, friend, wife, and mother, bravely died without regret; regretted by all. Adieu.

LETTER LXIII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN IN CHINA.

IN every letter I expect accounts of ſome new revolutions in China, ſome ſtrange occurrence in the ſtate, or diſaſter among my private acquaintance. I open every pacquet with tremulous expectation, and am agreeably diſappointed when I find my friends and my country continuing in felicity. I wander, but they are at reſt; they ſuffer few changes but what paſs in my own reſtleſs imagination; it is only the rapidity of my own motion, gives an imaginary ſwiftneſs to objects which are in ſome meaſure immoveable.

Yet believe me, my friend, that even China itſelf is imperceptibly degenerating from her ancient greatneſs; her laws are now more venal, and her merchants are more deceitful, than formerly; the very arts and ſciences have run to decay. Obſerve the carvings on our ancient bridges; figures that add grace even to nature. There is not an artiſt now in all the empire that can imitate their beauty. Our manufactures in porcelaine too are inferior to what we once were famous for; and even Europe now begins to excel us. There was a time when China was the receptacle of ſtrangers; when all were welcome, who either came to improve the ſtate, or admire it's greatneſs; now the empire is ſhut up from every foreign improvement; and the very inhabitants diſcourage each other from proſecuting their own internal advantages.

Whence this degeneracy in a ſtate ſo little ſubject to external revolutions? How happens it that China, which is now more powerful than ever, which is leſs ſubject to foreign invaſions, and even aſſiſted in ſome diſcoveries by her connections with Europe; whence comes it, I ſay, that the empire is thus declining ſo faſt into barbarity?

This decay is ſurely from nature, and not the reſult of voluntary degeneracy. In a period of two or three thouſand years, ſhe ſeems at proper intervals to produce great minds, with an effort reſembling that which introduces the viciſſitudes of ſeaſons. They riſe up at once, continue for an age, enlighten the world, fall like ripened corn, and mankind again gradually relapſe into priſtine barbarity. We little ones look around, are amazed at the decline, ſeek after the cauſes of this inviſible decay, attribute to want of encouragement what really proceeds from want of power; are aſtoniſhed to find every art and every ſcience in the decline, not conſidering that autumn is over, and fatigued nature again begins to repoſe for ſome ſucceeding effort.

Some periods have been remarakable for the production of men of extraordinary ſtature; others for producing ſome particular animals in great abundance; ſome for exceſſive plenty; and others again ſeemingly cauſeleſs famine. Nature, which ſhews herſelf ſo very different in her viſible productions, muſt ſurely differ alſo from herſelf in the production of minds; and while ſhe aſtoniſhes one age with the ſtrength and ſtature of a Milo or a Maximin, may bleſs another with the wiſdom of a Plato, or the goodneſs of an Antonine.

Let us not then attribute to accident the falling off of every nation; but to the natural revolution of things. Often, in the darkeſt ages, there has appeared ſome one man of ſuprizing abilities, who, with all his underſtanding, failed to bring his barbarous age into refinement; all mankind ſeemed to ſleep, till Nature gave the general call, and then the whole world ſeemed at once rouzed at the voice; ſcience triumphed in every country, and the brightneſs of a ſingle genius ſeemed loſt in a galaxy of contiguous glory.

Thus the enlightened periods in every age have been univerſal. At the time when China firſt began to emerge from barbarity, the Weſtern world was equally riſing into refinement; when we had our Yau, they had their Seſoſtris. In ſucceeding ages, Confucius and Pythagoras

ſeem

seem born nearly together, and a train of philosophers then sprung up as well in Greece as in China. The period of renewed barbarity began to have an universal spread much about the same time, and continued for several centuries, till in the year of the Christian æra 1400, the Emperor Yonglo arose, to revive the learning of the East; while, about the same time, the Medicean family laboured in Italy to raise infant genius from the cradle: thus we see politeness spreading over every part of the world in one age, and barbarity succeeding in another; at one period a blaze of light diffusing itself over the whole world, and at another all mankind wrapped up in the profoundest ignorance.

Such has been the situation of things in times past; and such probably it will ever be. China, I have observed, has evidently begun to degenerate from it's former politeness; and were the learning of the Europeans at present candidly considered, the decline would perhaps appear to have already taken place. We should find among the natives of the West, the study of morality displaced for mathematical disquisition, or metaphysical subtleties; we should find learning begin to separate from the useful duties and concerns of life, while none ventured to aspire after that character, but they who know much more than is truly amusing or useful. We should find every great attempt suppressed by prudence, and the rapturous sublimity in writing cooled by a cautious fear of offence. We should find few of those daring spirits, who bravely venture to be wrong, and who are willing to hazard much for the sake of great acquisitions. Providence has indulged the world with a period of almost four hundred years refinement; does it not now by degrees sink us into our former ignorance, leaving us only the love of wisdom, while it deprives us of it's advantages? Adieu.

LETTER LXIV.

FROM THE SAME.

THE princes of Europe have found out a manner of rewarding their subjects who have behaved well, by presenting them with about two yards of blue ribband, which is worn about the shoulder. They who are honoured with this mark of distinction are called Knights, and the king himself is always the head of the order. This is a very frugal method of recompensing the most important services; and it is very fortunate for kings that their subjects are satisfied with such trifling rewards. Should a nobleman happen to lose his leg in battle, the king presents him with two yards of ribband, and he is paid for the loss of his limb. Should an embassador spend all his paternal fortune in supporting the honour of his country abroad, the king presents him with two yards of ribband, which is to be considered as an equivalent to his estate. In short, while an European king has a yard of blue or green ribband left, he need be under no apprehensions of wanting statesmen, generals, and soldiers.

I cannot sufficiently admire those kingdoms in which men, with large patrimonial estates, are willing thus to undergo real hardships for empty favours. A person, already possessed of a competent fortune, who undertakes to enter the career of ambition, feels many real inconveniencies from his station, while it procures him no real happiness that he was not possessed of before. He could eat, drink, and sleep, before he became a courtier, as well, perhaps better, than when invested with his authority. He could command flatterers in a private station, as well as in his public capacity; and indulge at home every favourite inclination, uncensured and unseen by the people.

What real good then does an addition to a fortune already sufficient procure? Not any. Could the great man, by having his fortune encreased, encrease also his appetites, then precedence might be attended with real amusement.

Was he, by having his one thousand made two, thus enabled to enjoy two wives, or eat two dinners; then, indeed, he might be excused for undergoing some pain, in order to extend the sphere of his enjoyments. But, on the contrary,

trary, he finds his desire for pleasure often lessen, as he takes pains to be able to improve it; and his capacity of enjoyment diminishes as his fortune happens to encrease.

Instead therefore of regarding the great with envy, I generally consider them with some share of compassion. I look upon them as a set of good-natured misguided people, who are indebted to us, and not to themselves, for all the happiness they enjoy. For our pleasure, and not their own, they sweat under a cumberous heap of finery; for our pleasure, the lacquied train, the slow parading pageant, with all the gravity of grandeur, moves in review; a single coat, or a single footman, answers all the purposes of the most indolent refinement as well; and those who have twenty, may be said to keep one for their own pleasure, and the other nineteen merely for ours. So true is the observation of Confucius, 'that we take greater pains 'to persuade others that we are happy, 'than endeavouring to think so our'selves.'

But though this desire of being seen, of being made the subject of discourse, and of supporting the dignities of an exalted station, be troublesome enough to the ambitious; yet it is well for society that there are men thus willing to exchange ease and safety for danger and a ribband. We lose nothing by their vanity; and it would be unkind to endeavour to deprive a child of it's rattle. If a duke or a dutchess are willing to carry a long train for our entertainment, so much the worse for themselves; if they chuse to exhibit in public with a hundred lacquies and Mameluks in their equipage for our entertainment, still so much the worse for themselves; it is the spectators alone who give and receive the pleasure; they only the sweating figures that swell the pageant.

A Mandarine, who took much pride in appearing with a number of jewels on every part of his robe, was once accosted by an old sly Bonze, who following him through several streets, and bowing often to the ground, thanked him for his jewels. 'What does the 'man mean?' cried the Mandarine. 'Friend, I never gave thee any of 'my jewels.'—'No,' replied the other; 'but you have let me look at them, and 'that is all the use you can make of 'them yourself; so there is no difference 'between us, except that you have the 'trouble of watching them, and that is 'an employment I don't much desire.'

Adieu.

LETTER LXV.

FROM THE SAME.

THOUGH not very fond of seeing a pageant myself, yet I am generally pleased with being in the crowd which sees it; it is amusing to observe the effect which such a spectacle has upon the variety of faces, the pleasure it excites in some, the envy in others, and the wishes it raises in all. With this design, I lately went to see the entry of a foreign ambassador; resolved to make one in the mob, to shout as they shouted, to fix with earnestness upon the same frivolous objects, and participate, for a while, the pleasures and the wishes of the vulgar.

Struggling here for some time, in order to be first to see the cavalcade as it passed, some one of the crowd unluckily happened to tread upon my shoe, and tore it in such a manner, that I was utterly unqualified to march forward with the main body, and obliged to fall back in the rear. Thus rendered incapable of being a spectator of the show myself, I was at least willing to observe the spectators, and limped behind like one of the invalids which follow the march of an army.

In this plight, I was considering the eagerness that appeared on every face, how some bustled to get foremost, and others contented themselves with taking a transient peep when they could; how some praised the four black servants, that were stuck behind one of the equipages, and some the ribbands that decorated the horses necks in another; my attention was called off to an object more

more extraordinary than any that I had yet seen. A poor cobler sat in his stall by the way side, and continued to work while the crowd passed by, without testifying the smallest share of curiosity. I own, his want of attention excited mine; and as I stood in need of his assistance, I thought it best to employ a philosophic cobler on this occasion: perceiving my business, therefore, he desired me to enter and sit down, took my shoe in his lap, and began to mend it with his usual indifference and taciturnity.

'How, my friend,' said I to him, 'can you continue to work, while all 'those fine things are passing by your 'door?'—'Very fine they are, master,' returned the cobler, 'for those that like 'them, to be sure; but what are all those 'fine things to me? You do not know 'what it is to be a cobler, and so much 'the better for yourself. Your bread 'is baked, you may go and see sights 'the whole day, and eat a warm supper 'when you come home at night; but 'for me, if I should run hunting 'after all these fine folk, what should I 'get by my journey but an appetite? 'and, God help me, I have too much 'of that at home already, without stir'ring out for it. Your people, who 'may eat four meals a-day, and a sup'per at night, are but a bad example 'to such a one as I. No, master, as 'God has called me into this world, in 'order to mend old shoes, I have no 'business with fine folk, and they no 'business with me.' I here interrupted him with a smile. 'See this last, 'master,' continues he, 'and this ham'mer; this last and hammer are the two 'best friends I have in this world; no'body else will be my friend, because 'I want a friend. The great folks 'you saw pass by just now, have five 'hundred friends, because they have 'no occasion for them; now, while I 'stick to my good friends here, I am 'very contented; but when I ever so 'little run after sights and fine things, 'I begin to hate my work, I grow sad, 'and have no heart to mend shoes any 'longer.'

This discourse only served to raise my curiosity to know more of a man, whom Nature had thus formed into a philosopher. I therefore insensibly led him into an history of his adventures. 'I 'have lived,' said he, 'a wandering 'life, now five and fifty years, here to'day, and gone to-morrow; for it was 'my misfortune, when I was young, 'to be fond of changing.'—'You have 'been a traveller, then, I presume?' interrupted I. 'I cannot boast much 'of travelling,' continued he, 'for I 'have never left the parish in which I 'was born, but three times in my life, 'that I can remember; but then there 'is not a street in the whole neighbour'hood that I have not lived in, at some 'time or another. When I began to 'settle, and to take to my business in 'one street, some unforeseen misfortune, 'or a desire of trying my luck else'where, has removed me, perhaps a 'whole mile away from my former 'customers, while some more lucky 'cobler would come into my place, and 'make a handsome fortune among 'friends of my making; there was 'one, who actually died in a stall that 'I had left, worth seven pounds seven 'shillings, all in hard gold, which he 'had quilted into the waistband of his 'breeches.'

I could not but smile at these migrations of a man by the fire-side, and continued to ask if he had ever been married. 'Ay, that I have, master,' replied he, 'for sixteen long years; and 'a weary life I had of it, Heaven 'knows. My wife took it into her 'head, that the only way to thrive in 'this world, was to save money; so, 'though our comings-in was but about 'three shillings a week, all that ever 'she could lay her hands upon she used 'to hide away from me, though we 'were obliged to starve the whole week 'after for it.

'The first three years, we used to 'quarrel about this every day, and I al'ways got the better; but she had a 'hard spirit, and still continued to hide 'as usual; so that I was at last tired of 'quarrelling and getting the better, 'and she scrapped and scrapped at plea'sure, till I was almost starved to death. 'Her conduct drove me at last, in de'spair, to the ale-house: here I used to 'sit with people who hated home like 'myself, drank while I had money left, 'and run in score when any body would 'trust me; till at last, the landlady 'coming one day with a long bill when 'I was from home, and putting it into

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'my wife's hands, the length of it ef-
'fectually broke her heart. I ſearched
'the whole ſtall after ſhe was dead for
'money, but ſhe had hidden it ſo ef-
'fectually, that with all my pains I
'could never find a farthing.'

By this time my ſhoe was mended; and ſatisfying the poor artiſt for his trouble, and rewarding him beſides for his information, I took my leave, and returned home to lengthen out the amuſement his converſation afforded, by communicating it to my friend.

Adieu.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

THE

CITIZEN OF THE WORLD.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

LETTER LXVI.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO HINGPO, BY THE WAY OF MOSCOW.

GENEROSITY, properly applied, will ſupply every other external advantage in life, but the love of thoſe we converſe with; it will procure eſteem and a conduct reſembling real affection; but actual love is the ſpontaneous production of the mind, no generoſity can purchaſe, no rewards encreaſe, nor no liberality continue it; the very perſon who is obliged, has it not in his power to force his lingering affections upon the object he ſhould love, and voluntarily mix paſſion with gratitude.

Imparted fortune, and well-placed liberality, may procure the benefactor good-will, may load the perſon obliged with the ſenſe of the duty he lies under to retaliate: this is gratitude; and ſimple gratitude, untinctured with love, is all the return an ingenuous mind can beſtow for former benefits.

But gratitude and love are almoſt oppoſite affections; love is often an involuntary paſſion, placed upon our companions without our conſent, and frequently conferred without our previous eſteem. We love ſome men, we know not why; our tenderneſs is naturally excited in all their concerns; we excuſe their faults with the ſame indulgence, and approve their virtues with the ſame applauſe with which we conſider our own. While we entertain the paſſion it pleaſes us, we cheriſh it with delight, and give it up with reluctance; and love for love is all the reward we expect or deſire.

Gratitude, on the contrary, is never conferred, but where there have been previous endeavours to excite it; we conſider it as a debt, and our ſpirits wear a load till we have diſcharged the obligation. Every acknowledgment of gratitude is a circumſtance of humiliation; and ſome are found to ſubmit to frequent mortifications of this kind, proclaiming what obligations they owe, merely becauſe they think it in ſome meaſure cancels the debt.

Thus love is the moſt eaſy and agreeable, and gratitude the moſt humiliating affection of the mind; we never reflect on the man we *love*, without exulting in our choice, while he who has bound us to him by *benefits* alone, riſes to our idea as a perſon to whom we have, in ſome meaſure, forfeited our freedom. Love and gratitude are ſeldom therefore found in the ſame breaſt without impairing each other; we may tender the one or the other ſingly to thoſe we converſe with, but cannot command both together. By attempting to encreaſe, we diminiſh them; the mind becomes bankrupt under too large obligations; all additional benefits leſſen every hope of future return, and bar up every avenue that leads to tenderneſs.

In all our connections with ſociety, therefore, it is not only generous, but prudent, to appear inſenſible of the value of thoſe favours we beſtow, and endeavour to make the obligation ſeem as ſlight as poſſible. Love muſt be taken by ſtratagem, and not by open force: we ſhould ſeem ignorant that we oblige, and leave the mind at full liberty to give or refuſe it's affections; for conſtraint

may indeed leave the receiver still grateful, but it will certainly produce disgust.

If to procure gratitude be our only aim, there is no great art in making the acquisition; a benefit conferred demands a just acknowledgment, and we have a right to insist upon our due.

But it were much more prudent to forego our right on such an occasion, and exchange it, if we can, for love. We receive but little advantage from repeated protestations of gratitude, but they cost him very much from whom we exact them in return; exacting a grateful acknowledgment is demanding a debt by which the creditor is not advantaged, and the debtor pays with reluctance.

As Mencius the philosopher was travelling in pursuit of wisdom, night overtook him at the foot of a gloomy mountain, remote from the habitations of men. Here as he was straying, while rain and thunder conspired to make solitude still more hideous, he perceived a hermit's cell, and approaching, asked for shelter. 'Enter,' cries the hermit, in a severe tone; 'men deserve not to 'be obliged, but it would be imitating 'their ingratitude to treat them as they 'deserve. Come in: examples of vice 'may sometimes strengthen us in the 'ways of virtue.'

After a frugal meal, which consisted of roots and tea, Mencius could not repress his curiosity to know why the hermit had retired from mankind, the actions of whom taught the truest lessons of wisdom. 'Mention not the name of 'man,' cries the hermit, with indignation; 'here let me live retired from 'a base, ungrateful world; here, among 'the beasts of the forest, I shall find 'no flatterers; the lion is a generous 'enemy, and the dog a faithful friend; 'but man, base man, can poison the 'bowl, and smile while he presents it!' —'You have been used ill by man'kind,' interrupted the philosopher, shrewdly. 'Yes,' returned the hermit, 'on mankind I have exhausted my 'whole fortune; and this staff, and 'that cup, and those roots, are all that 'I have in return.'—'Did you bestow 'your fortune, or did you only lend 'it?' returned Mencius. 'I bestowed 'it, undoubtedly,' replied the other; 'for where were the merit of being a 'money-lender?'—'Did they ever own 'that they had received it?' still adds the philosopher. 'A thousand times,' cries the hermit; 'they every day load'ed me with professions of gratitude, 'for obligations received, and solici'tations for future favours.'—'If, 'then,' says Mencius, smiling, 'you 'did not lend your fortune, in order 'to have it returned, it is unjust to ac'cuse them of ingratitude; they owned 'themselves obliged, you expected no 'more; and they certainly earned each 'favour by frequently acknowledging 'the obligation.' The hermit was struck with the reply, and surveying his guest with emotion—'I have heard of 'the great Mencius, and you certainly 'are the man: I am now fourscore 'years old, but still a child in wisdom; 'take me back to the school of man, 'and educate me as one of the most ig'norant and the youngest of your dis'ciples!'

Indeed, my son, it is better to have friends in our passage through life than grateful dependants; and as love is a more willing, so it is a more lasting tribute than extorted obligation. As we are uneasy when greatly obliged, gratitude once refused, can never after be recovered: the mind that is base enough to disallow the just return, instead of feeling any uneasiness upon recollection, triumphs in it's new-acquired freedom, and in some measure is pleased with conscious baseness.

Very different is the situation of disagreeing friends, their separation produces mutual uneasiness: like that divided being in fabulous creation, their sympathetic souls once more desire their former union, the joys of both are imperfect, their gayest moments tinctured with uneasiness; each seeks for the smallest concessions to clear the way to a wished-for explanation; the most trifling acknowledgment, the slightest accident, serves to effect a mutual reconciliation.

But instead of pursuing the thought, permit me to soften the severity of advice by an European story, which will fully illustrate my meaning.

A fiddler and his wife, who had rubbed through life, as most couples usually do, sometimes good friends, at others not quite so well; one day happened to have a dispute, which was conducted with becoming spirit on both sides. The wife was sure she was right,

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and the husband was resolved to have his own way. What was to be done in such a case? The quarrel grew worse by explanations; and at last the fury of both rose to such a pitch, that they made a vow never to sleep together in the same bed for the future. This was the most rash vow that could be imagined, for they still were friends at bottom, and besides they had but one bed in the house; however, resolved they were to go through with it, and at night the fiddle-case was laid in bed between them, in order to make a separation. In this manner they continued for three weeks; every night the fiddle-case being placed as a barrier to divide them.

By this time, however, each heartily repented of their vow, their resentment was at an end, and their love began to return; they wished the fiddle-case away, but both had too much spirit to begin. One night, however, as they were both lying awake with the detested fiddle-case between them, the husband happened to sneeze; to which the wife, as is usual in such cases, bid God bless him: 'Ay, but,' returns the husband, 'woman, do you say that from your heart?'—'Indeed, I do, my poor Nicholas,' cries his wife, 'I say it with all my heart.'—'If so, then,' says the husband, 'we had as good remove the fiddle-case.'

LETTER LXVII.

FROM THE SAME.

BOOKS, my son, while they teach us to respect the interest of others, often make us unmindful of our own; while they instruct the youthful reader to grasp at social happiness, he grows miserable in detail, and attentive to universal harmony, often forgets that he himself has a part to sustain in the concert. I dislike, therefore, the philosopher who describes the inconveniencies of life in such pleasing colours, that the pupil grows enamoured of distress, longs to try the charms of poverty, meets it without dread, nor fears it's inconveniencies till he severely feels them.

A youth, who has thus spent his life among books, new to the world, and unacquainted with man, but by philosophic information, may be considered as a being whose mind is filled with the vulgar errors of the wise; utterly unqualified for a journey through life, yet confident of his own skill in the direction, he sets out with confidence, blunders on with vanity, and finds himself at last undone.

He first has learned from books, and then lays it down as a maxim, that all mankind are virtuous or vicious in excess; and he has been long taught to detest vice, and love virtue: warm, therefore, in attachments, and stedfast in enmity, he treats every creature as a friend or foe; expects from those he loves unerring integrity, and consigns his enemies to the reproach of wanting every virtue. On this principle he proceeds; and here begin his disappointments: upon a closer inspection of human nature, he perceives, that he should have moderated his friendship, and softened his severity; for he often finds the excellencies of one part of mankind clouded with vice, and the faults of the other brightened with virtue; he finds no character so sanctified that has not it's failings; none so infamous, but has somewhat to attract our esteem; he beholds impiety in lawn, and fidelity in fetters.

He now therefore, but too late, perceives that his regards should have been more cool, and his hatred less violent; that the truly wise seldom court romantic friendships with the good, and avoid, if possible, the resentment even of the wicked: every moment gives him fresh instances that the bonds of friendship are broken if drawn too closely, and that those whom he has treated with disrespect more than retaliate the injury: at length, therefore, he is obliged to confess, that he has declared war upon the vicious half of mankind, without being able to form an alliance among the virtuous to espouse his quarrel.

Our book-taught philosopher, however, is now too far advanced to recede; and though poverty be the just consequence of the many enemies his conduct has created, yet he is resolved to meet it without

without shrinking: philosophers have described poverty in most charming colours; and even his vanity is touched, in thinking, that he shall shew the world, in himself, one more example of patience, fortitude, and resignation. 'Come, then, O Poverty! for what is there in thee dreadful to the WISE? Temperance, health, and frugality, walk in thy train; chearfulness and liberty are ever thy companions. Shall any be ashamed of thee of whom Cincinnatus was not ashamed? The running brook, the herbs of the field, can amply satisfy nature; man wants but little, nor that little long. Come, then, O Poverty, while kings stand by, and gaze with admiration at the true philosopher's resignation!'

The goddess appears; for Poverty ever comes at the call: but, alas! he finds her by no means the charming figure books and his warm imagination had painted. As when an Eastern bride, whom her friends and relations had long described as a model of perfection, pays her first visit, the longing bridegroom lifts the veil to see a face he had never seen before; but instead of a countenance blazing with beauty like the sun, he beholds deformity shooting icicles to his heart; such appears Poverty to her new entertainer; all the fabric of enthusiasm is at once demolished, and a thousand miseries rise upon it's ruins, while Contempt, with pointing finger, is foremost in the hideous procession.

The poor man now finds that he can get no kings to look at him while he is eating; he finds that, in proportion as he grows poor, the world turns it's back upon him, and gives him leave to act the philosopher in all the majesty of solitude. It might be agreeable enough to play the philosopher, while we are conscious that mankind are spectators; but what signifies wearing the mask of sturdy contentment, and mounting the stage of restraint, when not one creature will assist at the exhibition! Thus is he forsaken of men, while his fortitude wants the satisfaction even of self-applause; for either he does not feel his present calamities, and that is natural *insensibility*, or he disguises his feelings, and that is *dissimulation*.

Spleen now begins to take up the man; not distinguishing in his resentments, he regards all mankind with detestation, and commencing man-hater, seeks solitude to be at liberty to rail.

It has been said, that he who retires to solitude, is either a beast or an angel: the censure is too severe, and the praise unmerited; the discontented being, who retires from society, is generally some good-natured man, who has begun life without experience, and knew not how to gain it in his intercourse with mankind. Adieu.

LETTER LXVIII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

I Formerly acquainted thee, most grave Fum, with the excellence of the English in the art of healing. The Chinese boast their skill in pulses, the Siamese their botanical knowledge; but the English advertising physicians alone, of being the great restorers of health, the dispensers of youth, and the insurers of longevity. I can never enough admire the sagacity of this country for the encouragement given to the professors of this art; with what indulgence does she foster up those of her own growth, and kindly cherish those that come from abroad! Like a skilful gardener, she invites them from every foreign climate to herself. Here every great exotic strikes root as soon as imported, and feels the genial beam of favour; while the mighty metropolis, like one vast munificent dunghill, receives them indiscriminately to her breast, and supplies each with more than native nourishment.

In other countries the physician pretends to cure disorders in the lump; the same doctor who combats the gout in the toe, shall pretend to prescribe for a pain in the head; and he who at one time cures a consumption, shall at another give drugs for a dropsy. How absurd and ridiculous! this is being a mere jack of all trades. Is the animal machine less complicated than a brass pin? Not less than ten different hands are required

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quired to make a pin; and shall the body be set right by one single operator?

The English are sensible of the force of this reasoning; they have therefore one doctor for the eyes, another for the toes; they have their sciatica doctors, and inoculating doctors; they have one doctor who is modestly content with securing them from bug-bites, and five hundred who prescribe for the bite of mad dogs.

The learned are not here retired with vicious modesty from public view; for every dead wall is covered with their names, their abilities, their amazing cures, and places of abode. Few patients can escape falling into their hands, unless blasted by lightning, or struck dead with some sudden disorder: it may sometimes happen, that a stranger who does not understand English, or a countryman who cannot read, dies without ever hearing of the vivifying drops, or restorative electuary; but for my part, before I was a week in town, I had learned to bid the whole catalogue of disorders defiance, and was perfectly acquainted with the names and the medicines of every great man, or great woman, of them all.

But as nothing pleases curiosity more than anecdotes of the great, however minute or trifling, I must present you, inadequate as my abilities are to the subject, with some account of those personages who lead in this honourable profession.

The first upon the list of glory is Doctor Richard Rock, F. U. N. This great man, short of stature, is fat, and waddles as he walks. He always wears a white three-tailed wig, nicely combed, and frizzed upon each cheek. Sometimes he carries a cane, but a hat never; it is indeed very remarkable, that this extraordinary personage should never wear an hat, but so it is he never wears an hat. He is usually drawn at the top of his own bills, sitting in his arm-chair, holding a little bottle between his finger and thumb, and surrounded with rotten teeth, nippers, pills, pacquets, and gallypots. No man can promise fairer nor better than he; for, as he observes, 'Be your disorder never so far 'gone, be under no uneasiness, make 'yourself quite easy, I can cure you.'

The next in fame, though by some reckoned of equal pretensions, is Doctor Timothy Franks, F. O. G. H. living in a place called the Old Bailey. As Rock is remarkably squab, his great rival Franks is as remarkably tall. He was born in the year of the Christian æra 1692, and is, while I now write, exactly sixty-eight years, three months, and four days old. Age, however, has no ways impaired his usual health and vivacity; I am told, he generally walks with his breast open. This gentleman, who is of a mixed reputation, is particularly remarkable for a becoming assurance, which carries him gently through life; for, except Doctor Rock, none are more blest with the advantages of face than Doctor Franks.

And yet the great have their foibles as well as the little. I am almost ashamed to mention it. Let the foibles of the great rest in peace. Yet I must impart the whole to my friend. These two great men are actually now at variance; yes, my dear Fum Hoam, by the head of our grandfather, they are now at variance like mere men, mere common mortals. The champion Rock advises the world to beware of bog-trotting quacks; while Franks retorts the wit and the sarcasm, (for they have both a world of wit) by fixing on his rival the odious appellation of Dumplin Dick. He calls the serious Doctor Rock, Dumplin Dick! Head of Confucius, what prophanation! Dumplin Dick! What a pity, ye powers, that the learned, who were born mutually to assist in enlightening the world, should thus differ among themselves, and make even the profession ridiculous! Sure the world is wide enough, at least, for two great personages to figure in; men of science should leave controversy to the little world below them; and then we might see Rock and Franks walking together hand in hand, smiling onward to immortality.

Next to these is Doctor Walker, preparator of his own medicines. This gentleman is remarkable for an aversion to quacks; frequently cautioning the public to be careful into what hands they commit their safety; by which he would insinuate, that if they do not employ him alone, they must be undone. His public spirit is equal to his success. Not for himself, but his country, is the gally-pot prepared, and the drops sealed up with proper directions for any part of the town or country. All this

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is for his country's good: so that he is now grown old in the practice of physic and virtue; and, to use his own elegance of expression, 'There is not such another medicine as his in the world again.'

This, my friend, is a formidable triumvirate; and yet, formidable as they are, I am resolved to defend the honour of Chinese physic against them all. I have made a vow to summon Doctor Rock to a solemn disputation in all the mysteries of the profession, before the face of every Philomath, student in astrology, and member of the learned societies. I adhere to, and venerate the doctrines of old Wang-shu-ho. In the very teeth of opposition I will maintain, 'that the heart is the son of the liver, which has the kidneys for it's mother, and the stomach for it's wife*.' I have therefore drawn up a disputation challenge, which is to be sent speedily, to this effect:

'I, Lien Chi Altangi, *D. N. R. P.* native of Honan in China, to Richard Rock, F. U. N. native of Garbage Alley in Wapping, defiance. Though, Sir, I am perfectly sensible of your importance, though no stranger to your studies in the path of nature, yet there may be many things in the art of physic with which you are yet unacquainted. I know full well a doctor thou art, great Rock, and so am I. Wherefore I challenge, and do hereby invite you, to a trial of learning upon hard problems, and knotty physical points. In this debate we will calmly investigate the whole theory and practice of medicine, botany, and chymistry; and I invite all the philomaths, with many of the lecturers in medicine, to be present at the dispute; which, I hope, will be carried on with due decorum, with proper gravity, and as befits men of erudition and science, among each other. But before we meet face to face, I would thus publicly, and in the face of the whole world, desire you to answer me one question; I ask it with the same earnestness with which you have often solicited the public; answer me, I say, at once, without having recourse to your physical dictionary, which of those three disorders, incident to the human body, is the most fatal, the *syncope*, *parenthesis*, or *apoplexy*? I beg your reply may be as public as this my demand†. I am, as hereafter may be, your admirer, or your rival.'

Adieu.

LETTER LXIX.

TO THE SAME.

INDULGENT Nature seems to have exempted this island from many of those epidemic evils which are so fatal in other parts of the world. A want of rain but for a few days beyond the expected season in China, spreads famine, desolation, and terror, over the whole country; the winds that blow from the brown bosom of the Western desart are impregnated with death in every gale; but in this fortunate land of Britain, the inhabitant courts health in every breeze, and the husbandman ever sows in joyful expectation.

But though the nation be exempt from real evils, think not, my friend, that it is more happy on this account than others. They are afflicted, it is true, with neither famine nor pestilence, but then there is a disorder peculiar to the country, which every season makes strange ravages among them; it spreads with pestilential rapidity, and infects almost every rank of people: what is still more strange, the natives have no name for this peculiar malady, though well known to foreign physicians by the appellation of *Epidemic Terror*.

A season is never known to pass in which the people are not visited by this cruel calamity in one shape or another, seemingly different, though ever the same: one year it issues from a baker's shop in the shape of a sixpenny loaf, the

* See Du Halde, Vol. II. Fol. p. 185.

† The day after this was published the editor received an answer, in which the doctor seems to be of opinion, that the apoplexy is most fatal.

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next it takes the appearance of a comet with a fiery tail, a third it threatens like a flat-bottomed boat, and a fourth it carries consternation at the bite of a mad dog. The people, when once infected, lose their relish for happiness, saunter about with looks of despondence, ask after the calamities of the day, and receive no comfort but in heightening each other's distress. It is insignificant how remote or near, how weak or powerful, the object of terror may be, when once they resolve to fright and be frighted, the merest trifles sow consternation and dismay, each proportions his fears not to the object, but to the dread he discovers in the countenance of others; for when once the fermentation is begun, it goes on of itself, though the original cause be discontinued which first set it in motion.

A dread of mad dogs is the *epidemic terror*, which now prevails, and the whole nation is at present actually groaning under the malignity of it's influence. The people sally from their houses with that circumspection which is prudent in such as expect a mad dog at every turning. The physician publishes his prescription, the beadle prepares his halter, and a few of unusual bravery arm themselves with boots and buff gloves, in order to face the enemy if he should offer to attack them. In short, the whole people stand bravely upon their defence, and seem by their present spirit to shew a resolution of not being tamely bit by mad dogs any longer.

Their manner of knowing whether a dog be mad or no, somewhat resembles the ancient European custom of trying witches. The old woman suspected was tied hand and foot and thrown into the water. If she swam, then she was instantly carried off to be burnt for a witch; if she sunk, then indeed she was acquitted of the charge, but drowned in the experiment. In the same manner a crowd gather round a dog suspected of madness, and they begin by teazing the devoted animal on every side; if he attempts to stand upon the defensive and bite, then is he unanimously found guilty, for 'a mad dog always snaps 'at every thing;' if, on the contrary, he strives to escape by running away, then he can expect no compassion, 'for mad 'dogs always run straight forward be-'fore them.'

It is pleasant enough for a neutral being like me, who have no share in those ideal calamities, to mark the stages of this national disease. The terror at first feebly enters with a disregarded story of a little dog, that had gone through a neighbouring village, that was thought to be mad by several that had seen him. The next account comes, that a mastiff ran through a certain town, and had bit five geese, which immediately run mad, foamed at the bill, and died in great agonies soon after. Then comes an affecting history of a little boy bit in the leg, and gone down to be dipped in the salt water; when the people have sufficiently shuddered at that, they are next congealed with a frightful account of a man who was said lately to have died from a bite he had received some years before. This relation only prepares the way for another, still more hideous; as, how the master of a family, with seven small children, were all bit by a mad lap-dog, and how the poor father first perceived the infection by calling for a draught of water, where he saw the lap-dog swimming in the cup.

When epidemic terror is thus once excited, every morning comes loaded with some new disaster; as in stories of ghosts each loves to hear the account, though it only serves to make him uneasy; so here each listens with eagerness, and adds to the tidings with new circumstances of peculiar horror. A lady, for instance, in the country, of very weak nerves, has been frighted by the barking of a dog; and this, alas! too frequently happens. The story soon is improved, and spreads, that a mad dog had frighted a lady of distinction. These circumstances begin to grow terrible before they have reached the neighbouring village; and there the report is, that a lady of quality was *bit* by a mad mastiff. This account every moment gathers new strength, and grows more dismal as it approaches the capital; and, by the time it has arrived in town, the lady is described with wild eyes, foaming mouth, running mad upon all four, barking like a dog, biting her servants, and at last smothered between two beds by the advice of her doctors: while the mad mastiff is in the mean time ranging the whole country over, slavering at the mouth, and seeking whom he may devour.

My landlady, a good natured wo-

man, but a little credulous, waked me some mornings ago before the usual hour, with horror and astonishment in her looks; she desired me, if I had any regard for my safety, to keep within; for a few days ago so dismal an accident had happened, as to put all the world upon their guard. A mad dog down in the country, she assured me, had bit a farmer, who soon becoming mad, ran into his own yard and bit a fine brindled cow; the cow quickly became as mad as the man, began to foam at the mouth, and raising herself up, walked about on her hind-legs, sometimes barking like a dog, and sometimes attempting to talk like the farmer. Upon examining the grounds of this story, I found my landlady had it from one neighbour, who had it from another neighbour, who heard it from very good authority.

Were most stories of this nature thoroughly examined, it would be found that numbers of such as have been said to suffer were no way injured, and that of those who have been actually bitten, not one in a hundred was bit by a mad dog. Such accounts in general, therefore, only serve to make the people miserable by false terrors, and sometimes fright the patient into actual phrenzy, by creating those very symptoms they pretended to deplore.

But even allowing three or four to die in a season of this terrible death, (and four is probably too large a concession) yet, still, it is not considered how many are preserved in their health and in their property by this devoted animal's services. The midnight robber is kept at a distance; the insidious thief is often detected, the healthful chace repairs many a worn constitution, and the poor man finds in his dog a willing assistant, eager to lessen his toil, and content with the smallest retribution.

'A dog,' says one of the English poets, 'is an honest creature, and I am 'a friend to dogs.' Of all the beasts that graze the lawn or hunt the forest, a dog is the only animal that, leaving his fellows, attempts to cultivate the friendship of man; to man he looks in all his necessities, with a speaking eye, for assistance; exerts for him all the little service in his power with chearfulness and pleasure; for him, bears famine and fatigue with patience and resignation; no injuries can abate his fidelity, no distress induce him to forsake his benefactor; studious to please, and fearing to offend, he is still an humble, stedfast dependant; and in him alone fawning is not flattery. How unkind, then, to torture this faithful creature, who has left the forest to claim the protection of man! How ungrateful a return to the trusty animal for all it's services!

Adieu.

LETTER LXX.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO HINGPO, BY THE WAY OF MOSCOW.

THE Europeans are themselves blind, who describe Fortune without sight. No first-rate beauty ever had finer eyes, or saw more clearly; they who have no other trade but seeking their fortune, need never hope to find her; coquet like, she flies from her close pursuers, and at last fixes on the plodding mechanic, who stays at home, and minds his business.

I am amazed, how men can call her blind, when, by the company she keeps, she seems so very discerning. Wherever you see a gaming table, be very sure fortune is not there; wherever you see a house with the doors open, be very sure fortune is not there; when you see a man whose pocket-holes are laced with gold, be satisfied fortune is not there; wherever you see a beautiful woman, good-natured and obliging, be convinced fortune is never there. In short, she is ever seen accompanying industry, and as often trundling a wheel-barrow, as lolling in a coach and six.

If you would make fortune your friend, or to personize her no longer, if you desire, my son, to be rich, and have money, be more eager to save than to acquire: when people say—'Money is 'to be got here, and money is to be 'got there,' take no notice; mind your own business; stay where you are; and secure all you can get, without stirring. When you hear that your neighbour has picked up a purse of gold in the street,

ſtreet, never run out into the ſame ſtreet, looking about you in order to pick up ſuch another; or when you are informed, that he has made a fortune in one branch of buſineſs, never change your own, in order to be his rival. Do not deſire to be rich all at once; but patiently add farthing to farthing. Perhaps you deſpiſe the petty ſum; and yet they who want a farthing, and have no friend that will lend them it, think farthings very good things. Whang, the fooliſh miller, when he wanted a farthing in his diſtreſs, found that no friend would lend, becauſe they knew he wanted. Did you ever read the ſtory of Whang in our books of Chineſe learning? He, who deſpiſing ſmall ſums, and graſping at all, loſt even what he had.

Whang, the miller, was naturally avaricious; nobody loved money better than he, or more reſpected thoſe that had it. When people would talk of a rich man in company, Whang would ſay—'I know him very well; he and I have been long acquainted; he and I are intimate; he ſtood for a child of mine:' but if ever a poor man was mentioned, he had not the leaſt knowledge of the man; he might be very well for aught he knew; but he was not fond of many acquaintances, and loved to chuſe his company.

Whang, however, with all his eagerneſs for riches, was in reality poor, he had nothing but the profits of his mill to ſupport him; but though theſe were ſmall, they were certain: while his mill ſtood and went, he was ſure of eating; and his frugality was ſuch, that he every day laid ſome money by, which he would at intervals count and contemplate with much ſatisfaction. Yet, ſtill his acquiſitions were not equal to his deſires, he only found himſelf above want, whereas he deſired to be poſſeſſed of affluence.

One day, as he was indulging theſe wiſhes, he was informed that a neighbour of his had found a pan of money under ground, having dreamed of it three nights running before. Theſe tidings were daggers to the heart of poor Whang. 'Here am I,' ſays he, 'toiling and moiling from morning to night, for a few paltry farthings, while neighbour Hanks only goes quietly to bed, and dreams himſelf into thouſands before morning. O that I could dream like him! with what pleaſure would I dig round the pan; how ſlily would I carry it home; not even my wife ſhould ſee me; and then, O the pleaſure of thruſting one's hand into a heap of gold up to the elbow!'

Such reflections only ſerved to make the miller unhappy; he diſcontinued his former aſſiduity, he was quite diſguſted with ſmall gains, and his cuſtomers began to forſake him. Every day he repeated the wiſh, and every night laid himſelf down in order to dream. Fortune, that was for a long time unkind, at laſt, however, ſeemed to ſmile upon his diſtreſſes, and indulged him with the wiſhed for viſion. He dreamed, that under a certain part of the foundation of his mill, there was concealed a monſtrous pan of gold and diamonds, buried deep in the ground, and covered with a large flat ſtone. He roſe up, thanked the ſtars that were at laſt pleaſed to take pity on his ſufferings, and concealed his good luck from every perſon, as is uſual in money dreams, in order to have the viſion repeated the two ſucceeding nights, by which he ſhould be certain of it's veracity. His wiſhes in this alſo were anſwered, he ſtill dreamed of the ſame pan of money, in the very ſame place.

Now, therefore, it was paſt a doubt; ſo getting up early the third morning, he repairs alone, with a mattock in his hand, to the mill, and began to undermine that part of the wall which the viſion directed. The firſt omen of ſucceſs that he met, was a broken mug; digging ſtill deeper, he turns up a houſe tile, quite new and entire. At laſt, after much digging, he came to the broad flat ſtone, but then ſo large, that it was beyond one man's ſtrength to remove it. 'Here,' cried he, in raptures to himſelf, 'here it is; under this ſtone, there is room for a very large pan of diamonds indeed! I muſt e'en go home to my wife, and tell her the whole affair, and get her to aſſiſt me in turning it up.' Away, therefore, he goes, and acquaints his wife with every circumſtance of their good fortune. Her raptures on this occaſion eaſily may be imagined, ſhe flew round his neck, and embraced him in an agony of joy; but thoſe tranſports, however, did not delay their eagerneſs to know the exact ſum: returning, therefore, ſpeedily together to the place where Whang had been digging, there they found—not, indeed, the expected treaſure, but the mill, their only ſupport, undermined, and fallen. Adieu.

LETTER LXXI.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

THE people of London are as fond of walking, as our friends at Pekin of riding: one of the principal entertainments of the citizens here in ſummer, is to repair about nightfall to a garden not far from town; where they walk about, ſhew their beſt cloaths and beſt faces, and liſten to a concert provided for the occaſion.

I accepted an invitation, a few evenings ago, from my old friend, the man in black, to be one of a party that was to ſup there; and at the appointed hour waited upon him at his lodgings. There I found the company aſſembled, and expecting my arrival. Our party conſiſted of my friend in ſuperlative finery, his ſtockings rolled, a black velvet waiſtcoat, which was formerly new, and a grey wig, combed down in imitation of hair. A pawn-broker's widow, of whom, by the bye, my friend was a profeſſed admirer, dreſſed out in green damask, with three gold rings on every finger. Mr. Tibbs, the ſecond-rate beau I have formerly deſcribed, together with his lady, in flimſy ſilk, dirty gauze inſtead of linnen, and a hat as big as an umbrella.

Our firſt difficulty was in ſettling how we ſhould ſet out. Mrs. Tibbs had a natural averſion to the water; and the widow, being a little in fleſh, as warmly proteſted againſt walking; a coach was therefore agreed upon; which being too ſmall to carry five, Mr. Tibbs conſented to ſit in his wife's lap.

In this manner, therefore, we ſet forward, being entertained by the way with the bodings of Mr. Tibbs, who aſſured us, he did not expect to ſee a ſingle creature for the evening above the degree of a cheeſemonger; that this was the laſt night of the gardens, and that, conſequently, we ſhould be peſtered with the nobility and gentry from Thames Street and Crooked Lane, with ſeveral other prophetic ejaculations, probably inſpired by the uneaſineſs of his ſituation.

The illuminations began before we arrived; and I muſt confeſs, that, upon entering the gardens, I found every ſenſe overpaid with more than expected pleaſure: the lights every where glimmering through the ſcarcely moving trees; the full-bodied conſort burſting on the ſtillneſs of the night, the natural conſort of the birds, in the more retired part of the grove, vying with that which was formed by art; the company gaily dreſſed, looking ſatisfaction, and the tables ſpread with various delicacies; all conſpired to fill my imagination with the viſionary happineſs of the Arabian law-giver, and lifted me into an extaſy of admiration. 'Head of Confucius,' cried I to my friend, 'this is fine! this 'unites rural beauty with courtly magnificence; if we except the virgins of 'immortality that hang on every tree, 'and may be plucked at every deſire, 'I do not ſee how this falls ſhort of 'Mahomet's Paradiſe!'—'As for virgins,' cries my friend, 'it is true, 'they are a fruit that do not much 'abound in our gardens here; but if 'ladies as plenty as apples in autumn, 'and as complying as any *Houry* of 'them all, can content you, I fancy we 'have no need to go to heaven for paradiſe.'

I was going to ſecond his remarks, when we were called to a conſultation by Mr. Tibbs and the reſt of the company, to know in what manner we were to lay out the evening to the greateſt advantage. Mrs. Tibbs was for keeping the genteel walk of the garden, where, ſhe obſerved, there was always the very beſt company; the widow, on the contrary, who came but once a ſeaſon, was for ſecuring a good ſtanding place to ſee the water-works, which ſhe aſſured us, would begin in leſs than an hour at fartheſt: a diſpute therefore began; and, as it was managed between two of very oppoſite characters, it threatened to grow more bitter at every reply. Mrs. Tibbs wondered how people could pretend to know the polite world, who had received all their rudiments of breeding behind a compter; to which the other replied, that, though ſome people ſat behind

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compters, yet they could sit at the head of their own tables too, and carve three good dishes of hot meat whenever they thought proper, which was more than some people could say for themselves, that hardly knew a rabbit and onions from a green goose and gooseberries.

It is hard to say where this might have ended, had not the husband, who probably knew the impetuosity of his wife's disposition, proposed to end the dispute by adjourning to a box, and try if there was any thing to be had for supper that was supportable. To this we all consented; but here a new distress arose, Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs would sit in none but a genteel box, a box where they might see and be seen; one, as they expressed it, in the very focus of public view: but such a box was not easy to be obtained, for though we were perfectly convinced of our own gentility, and the gentility of our appearance, yet we found it a difficult matter to persuade the keepers of the boxes to be of our opinion; they chose to reserve genteel boxes for what they judged more genteel company.

At last, however, we were fixed, though somewhat obscurely, and supplied with the usual entertainment of the place. The widow found the supper excellent, but Mrs. Tibbs thought every thing detestable. 'Come, come, 'my dear,' cries the husband, by way of consolation, 'to be sure we can't find 'such dressing here as we have at Lord 'Crump's, or Lady Crimp's; but for 'Vauxhall dressing, it is pretty good; 'it is not their victuals, indeed, I find 'fault with, but their wine; their wine,' cries he, drinking off a glass, 'indeed, 'is most abominable.'

By this last contradiction, the widow was fairly conquered in point of politeness. She perceived now that she had no pretensions in the world to taste, her very senses were vulgar, since she had praised detestable custard, and smacked at wretched wine; she was therefore content to yield the victory, and for the rest of the night, to listen and improve. It is true, she would now and then forget herself, and confess she was pleased; but they soon brought her back again to miserable refinement. She once praised the painting of the box in which we were sitting; but was soon convinced that such paltry pieces ought rather to excite horror than satisfaction; she ventured again to commend one of the singers; but Mrs. Tibbs soon let her know, in the stile of a connoisseur, that the singer in question had neither ear, voice, nor judgment.

Mr. Tibbs, now willing to prove that his wife's pretensions to music were just, entreated her to favour the company with a song; but to this she gave a positive denial—'For you know very 'well, my dear,' says she, 'that I am 'not in voice to-day; and when one's 'voice is not equal to one's judgment, 'what signifies singing? Besides, as 'there is no accompanyment, it would 'be but spoiling music.' All these excuses, however, were over-ruled by the rest of the company; who, though one would think they already had music enough, joined in the entreaty: but particularly the widow, now willing to convince the company of her breeding, pressed so warmly, that she seemed determined to take no refusal. At last, then, the lady complied; and, after humming for some minutes, began with such a voice, and such affectation, as I could perceive gave but little satisfaction to any except her husband. He sat with rapture in his eye, and beat time with his hand on the table.

You must observe, my friend, that it is the custom of this country, when a lady or gentleman happens to sing, for the company to sit as mute and motionless as statues. Every feature, every limb, must seem to correspond in fixed attention; and while the song continues, they are to remain in a state of universal petrefaction. In this mortifying situation, we had continued for some time, listening to the song, and looking with tranquillity, when the master of the box came to inform us, that the water-works were going to begin. At this information, I could instantly perceive the widow bounce from her seat; but correcting herself, she sat down again, repressed by motives of good-breeding. Mrs. Tibbs, who had seen the water-works a hundred times, resolving not to be interrupted, continued her song without any share of mercy, nor had the smallest pity upon our impatience. The widow's face, I own, gave me high entertainment; in it I could plainly read the struggle she felt between good-breeding and curiosity; she talked of the water-works the whole evening before, and seemed to have come merely

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in order to ſee them; but then ſhe could not bounce out in the very middle of a ſong, for that would be forfeiting all pretenſions to high life, or high-lived company, ever after: Mrs. Tibbs therefore kept on ſinging, and we continued to liſten; till at laſt, when the ſong was juſt concluded, the waiter came to inform us that the water-works were over!

'The water-works over!' cried the widow; 'the water-works over already! that's impoſſible! they can't be over ſo ſoon!'—'It is not my buſineſs,' replied the fellow, 'to contradict your ladyſhip; I'll run again and ſee.' He went, and ſoon returned with a confirmation of the diſmal tidings. No ceremony could now bind my friend's diſappointed miſtreſs, ſhe teſtified her diſpleaſure in the openeſt manner; in ſhort, ſhe now began to find fault in turn, and at laſt inſiſted upon going home, juſt at the time that Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs aſſured the company that the polite hours were going to begin, and that the ladies would inſtantaneouſly be entertained with the horns. Adieu.

LETTER LXXII.

FROM THE SAME.

NOT far from this city lives a poor tinker, who has educated ſeven ſons, all at this very time in arms and fighting for their country; and what reward do you think has the tinker from the ſtate for ſuch important ſervices? None in the world; his ſons, when the war is over, may probably be whipped from pariſh to pariſh as vagabonds; and the old man, when paſt labour, may die a priſoner in ſome houſe of correction.

Such a worthy ſubject in China would be held in univerſal reverence; his ſervices would be rewarded, if not with dignities, at leaſt with an exemption from labour; he would take the left-hand at feaſts, and mandarines themſelves would be proud to ſhew their ſubmiſſion. The Engliſh laws puniſh vice; the Chineſe laws do more, they reward virtue!

Conſidering the little encouragement given to matrimony here, I am not ſurprized at the diſcouragements given to propagation. Would you believe it, my dear Fum Hoam, there are laws made which even forbid the peoples marrying each other? By the head of Confucius, I jeſt not; there are ſuch laws in being here; and yet their law-givers have neither been inſtructed among the Hottentots, nor imbibed their principles of equity from the natives of Anamaboo.

There are laws which ordain, that no man ſhall marry a woman againſt her own conſent. This, though contrary to what we are taught in Aſia, and though in ſome meaſure a clog upon matrimony, I have no great objection to. There are laws which ordain, that no woman ſhall marry againſt her father and mother's conſent, unleſs arrived at an age of maturity; by which is underſtood thoſe years when women, with us, are generally paſt child-bearing. This muſt be a clog upon matrimony, as it is more difficult for the lover to pleaſe three than one, and much more difficult to pleaſe old people than young ones. The laws ordain, that the conſenting couple ſhall take a long time to conſider before they marry; this is a very great clog, becauſe people love to have all raſh actions done in a hurry. It is ordained, that all marriages ſhall be proclaimed before celebration; this is a ſevere clog, as many are aſhamed to have their marriage made public, from motives of vicious modeſty, and many afraid from views of temporal intereſt. It is ordained, that there is nothing ſacred in the ceremony, but that it may be diſſolved, to all intents and purpoſes, by the authority of any civil magiſtrate. And yet, oppoſite to this, it is ordained, that the prieſt ſhall be paid a large ſum of money for granting his ſacred permiſſion.

Thus you ſee, my friend, that matrimony here is hedged round with ſo many obſtructions, that thoſe who are willing to break through or ſurmount them muſt be contented, if at laſt they find it a bed of thorns. The laws are not to blame, for they have deterred the people from engaging as much as they could.

could. It is indeed become a very serious affair in England, and none but serious people are generally found willing to engage. The young, the gay, and the beautiful, who have motives of passion only to induce them, are seldom found to embark, as those inducements are taken away; and none but the old, the ugly, and the mercenary, are seen to unite; who, if they have any posterity at all, will probably be an ill-favoured race like themselves.

What gave rise to those laws might have been some such accidents as these, It sometimes happened that a miser, who had spent all his youth in scraping up money to give his daughter such a fortune as might get a mandarine husband, found his expectations disappointed at last, by running away with his footman; this must have been a sad shock to the poor disconsolate parent, to see his poor daughter in a one-horse chaise, when he had designed her for a coach and six. What a stroke from Providence! to see his dear money go to enrich a beggar; all Nature cried out at the profanation!

It sometimes happened, also, that a lady who had inherited all the titles and all the nervous complaints of nobility, thought fit to impair her dignity, and mend her constitution, by marrying a farmer: this must have been a sad shock to her inconsolable relations, to see so fine a flower snatched from a flourishing family, and planted in a dunghill; this was an absolute inversion of the first principles of things.

In order, therefore, to prevent the great from being thus contaminated by vulgar alliances, the obstacles to matrimony have been so contrived, that the rich only can marry amongst the rich; and the poor, who would leave celibacy, must be content to encrease their poverty with a wife. Thus have their laws fairly inverted the inducements to matrimony: Nature tells us, that beauty is the proper allurement of those who are rich, and money of those who are poor; but things here are so contrived, that the rich are invited to marry by that fortune which they do not want, and the poor have no inducement but that beauty which they do not feel.

An equal diffusion of riches through any country ever constitutes it's happiness. Great wealth in the possession of one stagnates, and extreme poverty with another keeps him in unambitious indigence; but the moderately rich are generally active; not too far removed from poverty to fear it's calamities, nor too near extreme wealth to slacken the nerve of labour, they remain still between both in a state of continual fluctuation. How impolitic, therefore, are those laws which promote the accumulation of wealth among the rich, more impolitic still in attempting to increase the depression on poverty!

Bacon, the English philosopher, compares money to manure—'If gathered 'in heaps,' says he, 'it does no good; 'on the contrary, it becomes offensive. 'But being spread, though never so 'thinly, over the surface of the earth, 'it enriches the whole country.' Thus the wealth a nation possesses must expatiate, or it is of no benefit to the public; it becomes rather a grievance, where matrimonial laws thus confine it to a few.

But this restraint upon matrimonial community, even considered in a physical light, is injurious. As those who rear up animals take all possible pains to cross the strain, in order to improve the breed; so, in those countries where marriage is most free, the inhabitants are found every age to improve in stature and in beauty; on the contrary, where it is confined to a *cast*, a *tribe*, or an *hord*, as among the Gaurs, the Jews, or the Tartars, each division soon assumes a family likeness, and every tribe degenerates into peculiar deformity. From hence it may be easily inferred, that if the mandarines here are resolved only to marry among each other, they will soon produce a posterity with mandarine faces; and we shall see the heir of some honourable family scarce equal to the abortion of a country farmer.

These are a few of the obstacles to marriage here; and it is certain they have in some measure answered the end, for celibacy is both frequent and fashionable. Old batchelors appear abroad without a mask; and old maids, my dear Fum Hoam, have been absolutely known to ogle. To confess in friendship, if I were an Englishman, I fancy I should be an old batchelor myself; I should never find courage to run through all the adventures prescribed by the law. I could submit to court my mistress herself upon reasonable terms, but to court her

her father, her mother, and a long tribe of cousins, aunts, and relations, and then stand the butt of a whole country church; I would as soon turn tail and make love to her grandmother.

I can conceive no other reason for thus loading matrimony with so many prohibitions, unless it be that the country was thought already too populous, and this was found to be the most effectual means of thinning it. If this was the motive, I cannot but congratulate the wise projectors on the success of their scheme. 'Hail, O ye dim-sighted politicians, ye weeders of men! 'Tis yours to clip the wing of industry, and convert Hymen to a broker. 'Tis yours to behold small objects with a microscopic eye, but to be blind to those which require an extent of vision. 'Tis yours, O ye discerners of mankind, to lay the line between society, and weaken that force by dividing, which should bind with united vigour. 'Tis yours, to introduce national real distress, in order to avoid the imaginary distresses of a few. Your actions can be justified by a hundred reasons like truth; they can be opposed but by a few reasons, and those reasons are true.' Farewel.

LETTER LXXIII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO HINGPO, BY THE WAY OF MOSCOW.

AGE, that lessens the enjoyment of life, encreases our desire of living. Those dangers which, in the vigour of youth, we had learned to despise, assume new terrors as we grow old. Our caution encreasing as our years encrease, fear becomes at last the prevailing passion of the mind; and the small remainder of life is taken up in useless efforts to keep off our end, or provide for a continued existence.

Strange contradiction in our nature, and to which even the wise are liable! If I should judge of that part of life which lies before me, by that which I have already seen, the prospect is hideous. Experience tells me, that my past enjoyments have brought me no real felicity; and sensation assures me, that those I have felt are stronger than those which are yet to come. Yet experience and sensation in vain persuade; hope, more powerful than either, dresses out the distant prospect in fancied beauty; some happiness in long perspective still beckons me to pursue; and, like a losing gamester, every new disappointment encreases my ardour to continue the game.

Whence, my friend, this encreased love of life, which grows upon us with our years; whence comes it, that we thus make greater efforts to preserve our existence, at a period when it becomes scarce worth the keeping? Is it that Nature, attentive to the preservation of mankind, encreases our wishes to live, while she lessens our enjoyments; and, as she robs the senses of every pleasure, equips imagination in the spoil? Life would be insupportable to an old man, who, loaded with infirmities, feared death no more than when in the vigour of manhood; the numberless calamities of decaying nature, and the consciousness of surviving every pleasure, would at once induce him with his own hand to terminate the scene of misery; but happily the contempt of death forsakes him at a time when it could only be prejudicial; and life acquires an imaginary value, in proportion as it's real value is no more.

Our attachment to every object around us encreases, in general, from the length of our acquaintance with it. 'I would not chuse,' says a French philosopher, 'to see an old post pulled up, with which I had been long acquainted.' A mind long habituated to a certain set of objects, insensibly becomes fond of seeing them; visits them from habit, and parts from them with reluctance: from hence proceed the avarice of the old in every kind of possession. They love the world, and all that it produces; they love life, and all it's advantages; not because it gives them pleasure, but because they have known it long.

Chinvang the Chaste ascending the throne of China, commanded that all who were unjustly detained in prison, during the preceding reigns, should be set free. Among the number who came to thank their deliverer on this occasion, there

there appeared a majestic old man, who, falling at the emperor's feet, addressed him as follows. 'Great father of China, behold a wretch, now eighty-five years old, who was shut up in a dungeon at the age of twenty-two. I was imprisoned, though a stranger to crime, or without being even confronted by my accusers. I have now lived in solitude and darkness for more than fifty years, and am grown familiar with distress. As yet dazzled with the splendour of that sun to which you have restored me, I have been wandering the streets to find some friend that would assist, or relieve, or remember me; but my friends, my family, and relations, are all dead, and I am forgotten. Permit me then, O Chinvang, to wear out the wretched remains of life in my former prison; the walls of my dungeon are to me more pleasing than the most splendid palace; I have not long to live, and shall be unhappy, except I spend the rest of my days where my youth was passed; in that prison from whence you were pleased to release me.'

The old man's passion for confinement is similar to that we all have for life. We are habituated to the prison; we look round with discontent, are displeased with the abode, and yet the length of our captivity only encreases our fondness for the cell. The trees we have planted, the houses we have built, or the posterity we have begotten, all serve to bind us closer to earth, and embitter our parting. Life sues the young like a new acquaintance; the companion, as yet unexhausted, is at once instructive and amusing; its company pleases; yet for all this it is but little regarded. To us, who are declined in years, life appears like an old friend; it's jests have been anticipated in former conversation; it has no new story to make us smile, no new improvement with which to surprize, yet still we love it; destitute of every agreement, still we love it; husband the wasting treasure with encreased frugality, and feel all the poignancy of anguish in the fatal separation.

Sir Philip Mordaunt was young, beautiful, sincere, brave, an Englishman. He had a compleat fortune of his own, and the love of the king his master, which was equivalent to riches. Life opened all her treasure before him, and promised a long succession of future happiness. He came, tasted of the entertainment, but was disgusted even in the beginning. He professed an aversion to living; was tired of walking round the same circle; had tried every enjoyment, and found them all grow weaker at every repetition. 'If life be in youth so displeasing,' cried he to himself, 'what will it appear when age comes on! if it be at present indifferent, sure it will then be execrable.' This thought embittered every reflection; till, at last, with all the serenity of perverted reason, he ended the debate with a pistol! Had this self-deluded man been apprized, that existence grows more desirable to us the longer we exist, he would have then faced old age without shrinking, he would have boldly dared to live, and served that society, by his future assiduity, which he basely injured by his desertion. Adieu.

LETTER LXXIV.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

In reading the news-papers here, I have reckoned up not less than twenty-five great men, seventeen very great men, and nine very extraordinary men, in less than the compass of half a year. 'These,' say the Gazettes, 'are the men that posterity are to gaze at with admiration; these the names that fame will be employed in holding up for the astonishment of succeeding ages.' Let me see—forty-six great men in half a year, amounts just to ninety-two in a year. I wonder how posterity will be able to remember them all; or whether the people, in future times, will have any other business to mind, but that of getting the catalogue by heart.

Does the mayor of a corporation make a speech? he is instantly set down for a great man. Does a pedant digest his

common place-book into a folio? he quickly becomes great. Does a poet ſtring up trite ſentiments in rhyme? he alſo becomes the great man of the hour. How diminutive ſoever the object of admiration, each is followed by a crowd of ſtill more diminutive admirers. The ſhout begins in his train, onward he marches toward immortality, looks back at the purſuing crowd with ſelf-ſatisfaction; catching all the oddities, the whimſies, the abſurdities, and the littleneſſes of conſcious greatneſs, by the way.

I was yeſterday invited by a gentleman to dinner, who promiſed that our entertainment ſhould conſiſt of an haunch of veniſon, a turtle, and a great man. I came, according to appointment. The veniſon was fine, the turtle good, but the great man inſupportable. The moment I ventured to ſpeak, I was at once contradicted with a ſnap. I attempted, by a ſecond and third aſſault, to retrieve my loſt reputation, but was ſtill beat back with confuſion. I was reſolved to attack him once more from entrenchment, and turned the converſation upon the government of China: but even here he aſſerted, ſnapped, and contradicted, as before. 'Heavens,' thought I, 'this 'man pretends to know China even 'better than myſelf!' I looked round to ſee who was on my ſide, but every eye was fixed in admiration on the great man; I therefore at laſt thought proper to ſit ſilent, and act the pretty gentleman during the enſuing converſation.

When a man has once ſecured a circle of admirers, he may be as ridiculous here as he thinks proper; and it all paſſes for elevation of ſentiment, or learned abſence. If he tranſgreſſes the common forms of breeding, miſtakes even a teapot for a tobacco-box, it is ſaid that his thoughts are fixed on more important objects: to ſpeak and act like the reſt of mankind is to be no greater than they. There is ſomething of oddity in the very idea of greatneſs; for we are ſeldom aſtoniſhed at a thing very much reſembling ourſelves.

When the Tartars make a Lama, their firſt care is to place him in a dark corner of the temple; here he is to ſit, half concealed from view, to regulate the motion of his hands, lips, and eyes; but, above all, he is enjoined gravity and ſilence. This, however, is but the prelude to his apotheoſis: a ſet of emiſſaries are diſpatched among the people to cry up his piety, gravity, and love of raw fleſh; the people take them at their word, approach the Lama, now become an idol, with the moſt humble proſtration; he receives their addreſſes without motion, commences a god, and is ever after fed by his prieſts with the ſpoon of immortality. The ſame receipt in this country ſerves to make a great man. The idol only keeps cloſe, ſends out his little emiſſaries to be hearty in his praiſe; and ſtraight, whether ſtateſman or author, he is ſet down in the liſt of fame, continuing to be praiſed while it is faſhionable to praiſe, or while he prudently keeps his minuteneſs concealed from the public.

I have viſited many countries, and have been in cities without number, yet never did I enter a town which could not produce ten or twelve of thoſe little great men; all fancying themſelves known to the reſt of the world, and complimenting each other upon their extenſive reputation. It is amuſing enough when two of thoſe domeſtic prodigies of learning mount the ſtage of ceremony, and give and take praiſe from each other. I have been preſent when a German doctor, for having pronounced a panegyric upon a certain monk, was thought the moſt ingenious man in the world; till the monk ſoon after divided this reputation by returning the compliment; by which means they both marched off with univerſal applauſe.

The ſame degree of undeſerved adulation that attends our great man while living, often alſo follows him to the tomb. It frequently happens that one of his little admirers ſits down big with the important ſubject, and is delivered of the hiſtory of his life and writings. This may properly be called the revolutions of a life between the fire-ſide and the eaſy-chair. In this we learn the year in which he was born, at what an early age he gave ſymptoms of uncommon genius and application, together with ſome of his ſmart ſayings, collected by his aunt and mother, while yet but a boy. The next book introduces him to the univerſity, where we are informed of his amazing progreſs in learning, his excellent ſkill in darning ſtockings, and his new invention for papering books to ſave the covers. He next makes his appearance in the re-

public

public of letters, and publishes his folio. Now the colossus is reared, his works are eagerly bought up by all the purchasers of scarce books. The learned societies invite him to become a member; he disputes against some foreigner with a long Latin name, conquers in the controversy, is complimented by several authors of gravity and importance, is excessively fond of egg-sauce with his pig, becomes president of a literary club, and dies in the meridian of his glory. Happy they, who thus have some little faithful attendant, who never forsakes them, but prepares to wrangle and to praise against every opposer; at once ready to encrease their pride while living, and their character when dead. For you and I, my friend, who have no humble admirer thus to attend us, we, who neither are, nor never will be, great men, and who do not much care whether we are great men or no, at least let us strive to be honest men, and to have common sense.

LETTER LXXV.

FROM THE SAME.

THERE are numbers in this city who live by writing new books; and yet there are thousands of volumes in every large library unread and forgotten. This, upon my arrival, was one of those contradictions which I was unable to account for. 'Is it possible,' said I, 'that there should be any demand for new books, before those already published are read? Can there be so many employed in producing a commodity with which the market is already overstocked; and with goods also better than any of modern manufacture!'

What at first view appeared an inconsistence, is a proof at once of this people's wisdom and refinement. Even allowing the works of their ancestors better written than theirs, yet those of the moderns acquire a real value, by being marked with the impression of the times. Antiquity has been in the possession of others, the present is our own; let us first, therefore, learn to know what belongs to ourselves; and then, if we have leisure, cast our reflections back to the reign of Shonou, who governed twenty thousand years before the creation of the moon.

The volumes of antiquity, like medals, may very well serve to amuse the curious; but the works of the moderns, like the current coin of a kingdom, are much better for immediate use; the former are often prized above their intrinsic value, and kept with care; the latter seldom pass for more than they are worth, and are often subject to the merciless hands of sweating critics, and clipping compilers: the works of antiquity were ever praised, those of the moderns read; the treasures of our ancestors have our esteem, and we boast the passion; those of cotemporary genius engage our heart, although we blush to own it. The visits we pay the former resemble those we pay the great; the ceremony is troublesome, and yet such as we would not chuse to forego; our acquaintance with modern books is like sitting with a friend; our pride is not flattered in the interview, but it gives more internal satisfaction.

In proportion as society refines, new books must ever become more necessary. Savage rusticity is reclaimed by oral admonition alone; but the elegant excesses of refinement are best corrected by the still voice of studious enquiry. In a polite age, almost every person becomes a reader, and receives more instruction from the press than the pulpit. The preaching Bonze may instruct the illiterate peasant; but nothing less than the insinuating address of a fine writer can win it's way to an heart already relaxed in all the effeminacy of refinement. Books are necessary to correct the vices of the polite; but those vices are ever changing, and the antidote should be changed accordingly, should still be new.

Instead therefore of thinking the number of new publications here too great, I could wish it still greater, as they are the most useful instruments of reformation. Every country must be instructed either by *writers* or *preachers*; but as the number of readers encreases, the

number of hearers is proportionably diminished, the writer becomes more useful, and the preaching Bonze less necessary.

Instead, therefore, of complaining that writers are overpaid, when their works procure them a bare subsistence, I should imagine it the duty of a state not only to encourage their numbers, but their industry. A Bonze is rewarded with immense riches for instructing only a few, even of the most ignorant, of the people; and sure the poor scholar should not beg his bread, who is capable of instructing a million.

Of all rewards, I grant, the most pleasing to a man of real merit, is fame; but a polite age, of all times, is that in which scarce any share of merit can acquire it. What numbers of fine writers in the latter empire of Rome, when refinement was carried to the highest pitch, have missed that fame and immortality which they had fondly arrogated to themselves? How many Greek authors, who wrote at that period when Constantinople was the refined mistress of the empire, now rest either not printed, or not read, in the libraries of Europe! Those who came first, while either state as yet was barbarous, carried all the reputation away. Authors, as the age refined, became more numerous, and their numbers destroyed their fame. It is but natural, therefore, for the writer, when conscious that his works will not procure him fame hereafter, to endeavour to make them turn out to his temporal interest here.

Whatever be the motives which induce men to write, whether avarice or fame, the country becomes most wise and happy, in which they most serve for instructors. The countries where sacerdotal instruction alone is permitted, remain in ignorance, superstition, and hopeless slavery. In England, where there are as many new books published as in all the rest of Europe together, a spirit of freedom and reason reigns among the people; they have been often known to act like fools, they are generally found to think like men.

The only danger that attends a multiplicity of publications, is that some of them may be calculated to injure, rather than benefit, society. But where writers are numerous, they also serve as a check upon each other; and, perhaps, a literary inquisition is the most terrible punishment that can be conceived to a literary transgressor.

But to do the English justice, there are but few offenders of this kind; their publications, in general, aim at mending either the heart, or improving the common weal. The dullest writer talks of virtue, and liberty, and benevolence, with esteem; tells his true story, filled with good and wholesome advice; warns against slavery, bribery, or the bite of a mad dog; and dresses up his little useful magazine of knowledge and entertainment, at least with a good intention. The dunces of France, on the other hand, who have less encouragement, are more vicious. Tender hearts, languishing eyes, Leonora in love at thirteen, extatic transports, stolen blisses, are the frivolous subjects of their frivolous memoirs. In England, if a bawdy blockhead thus breaks in on the community, he sets his whole fraternity in a roar; nor can he escape, even though he should fly to nobility for shelter.

Thus even dunces, my friend, may make themselves useful. But there are others whom Nature has blest with talents above the rest of mankind; men capable of thinking with precision, and impressing their thoughts with rapidity. Beings who diffuse those regards upon mankind, which others contract and settle upon themselves. These deserve every honour from that community of which they are more peculiarly the children; to such I would give my heart, since to them I am indebted for it's humanity! Adieu.

LETTER LXXVI.

FROM HINGPO, TO LIEN CHI ALTANGI, BY THE WAY OF MOSCOW.

I Still remain at Terki, where I have received that money which was remitted here in order to release me from captivity. My fair companion still improves in my esteem; the more I know her mind, her beauty becomes more poignant; she appears charming, even among the daughters of Circassia.

Yet

Yet were I to examine her beauty with the art of a statuary, I should find numbers here that far surpass her; Nature has not granted her all the boasted Circassian regularity of feature, and yet she greatly exceeds the fairest of the country in the art of seizing the affections. 'Whence,' have I often said to myself, 'this resistless magic that attends even moderate charms? Though I regard the beauties of the country with admiration, every interview weakens the impression, but the form of Zelis grows upon my imagination, I never behold her without an encrease of tenderness and respect. Whence this injustice of the mind in preferring imperfect beauty to that which Nature seems to have finished with care? Whence the infatuation, that he whom a comet could not amaze, should be astonished at a meteor!' When reason was thus fatigued to find an answer, my imagination pursued the subject; and this was the result.

I fancied myself placed between two landscapes, this called the Region of Beauty, and that the Valley of the Graces; the one adorned with all that luxuriant Nature could bestow; the fruits of various climates adorned the trees, the grove resounded with music, the gale breathed perfume, every charm that could arise from symmetry and exact distribution were here conspicuous, the whole offering a prospect of pleasure without end. The Valley of the Graces, on the other hand, seemed by no means so inviting; the streams and the groves appeared just as they usually do in frequented countries; no magnificent parterres, no consort in the grove, the rivulet was edged with weeds, and the rook joined it's voice to that of the nightingale. All was simplicity and nature.

The most striking objects ever first allure the traveller. I entered the Region of Beauty with encreased curiosity, and promised myself endless satisfaction in being introduced to the presiding goddess. I perceived several strangers, who entered with the same design; and what surprized me not a little, was to see several others hastening to leave this abode of seeming felicity.

After some fatigue, I had at last the honour of being introduced to the goddess, who represented Beauty in person. She was seated on a throne, at the foot of which stood several strangers lately introduced like me, all regarding her form in extasy. 'Ah, what eyes! what lips! how clear her complexion! how perfect her shape!' At these exclamations, Beauty, with downcast eyes, would endeavour to counterfeit modesty; but soon again looking round, as if to confirm every spectator in his favourable sentiments, sometimes she would attempt to allure us by smiles; and at intervals would bridle back, in order to inspire us with respect as well as tenderness.

This ceremony lasted for some time, and had so much employed our eyes, that we had forgot all this while that the goddess was silent. We soon, however, began to perceive the defect. 'What,' said we, among each other, 'are we to have nothing but languishing airs, soft looks, and inclinations of the head? Will the goddess only deign to satisfy our eyes?' Upon this, one of the company stepped up to present her with some fruits he had gathered by the way. She received the present, most sweetly smiling, and with one of the whitest hands in the world; but still not a word escaped her lips.

I now found that my companions grew weary of their homage; they went off, one by one; and resolving not to be left behind, I offered to go in my turn; when, just at the door of the temple, I was called back by a female, whose name was Pride, and who seemed displeased at the behaviour of the company. 'Where are you hastening?' said she to me, with an angry air; 'the goddess of Beauty is here.'—'I have been to visit her, Madam,' replied I, 'and find her more beautiful even than report had made her.'—'And why, then, will you leave her?' added the female. 'I have seen her long enough,' returned I; 'I have got all her features by heart. Her eyes are still the same. Her nose is a very fine one, but it is still just such a nose now as it was half an hour ago. Could she throw a little more mind into her face, perhaps I should be for wishing to have more of her company.'—'What signifies,' replied my female, 'whether she has a mind or not? Has she any occasion for a mind, so formed as she is by Nature? If she had a common face, indeed, there might be some reason for thinking to improve it; but when features are already perfect, every alteration

'would

'would but impair them. A fine face 'is already at the point of perfection, 'and a fine lady should endeavour to 'keep it so; the impression it would 'receive from thought, would but di-'sturb it's whole œconomy.'

To this speech I gave no reply, but made the best of my way to the Valley of the Graces. Here I found all those who before had been my companions in the Region of Beauty, now upon the same errand.

As we entered the valley, the prospect insensibly seemed to improve; we found every thing so natural, so domestic, and pleasing, that our minds, which before were congealed in admiration, now relaxed into gaiety and good-humour. We had designed to pay our respects to the presiding goddess, but she was no where to be found. One of our companions asserted, that her temple lay to the right; another, to the left; a third insisted that it was straight before us; and a fourth, that we had left it behind. In short, we found every thing familiar and charming, but could not determine where to seek for the Grace in person.

In this agreeable incertitude we passed several hours; and, though very desirous of finding the goddess, by no means impatient of the delay. Every part of the valley presented some minute beauty, which, without offering itself at once, stole within the soul, and captivated us with the charms of our retreat. Still, however, we continued to search; and might still have continued, had we not been interrupted by a voice which, though we could not see from whence it came, addressed us in this manner:

'If you would find the Goddess of 'Grace, seek her not under one form, 'for she assumes a thousand. Ever 'changing under the eye of inspection, 'her variety, rather than her figure, is 'pleasing. In contemplating her beau-'ty, the eye glides over every per-'fection with giddy delight, and, ca-'pable of fixing no where, is charmed 'with the whole*. She is now Con-'templation with solemn look, again 'Compassion with humid eye; she now 'sparkles with joy, soon every feature 'speaks distress: her looks, at times, 'invite our approach, at others, repress 'our presumption; the goddess cannot 'be properly called Beautiful under any 'one of these forms, but by combining 'them all, she becomes irresistibly pleas-'ing.' Adieu.

LETTER LXXVII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

THE shops of London are as well furnished as those of Pekin. Those of London have a picture hung at their door, informing the passengers what they have to sell, as those at Pekin have a board to assure the buyer that they have no intentions to cheat him.

I was this morning to buy silk for a night-cap. Immediately upon entering the mercer's shop, the master and his two men, with wigs plaistered with powder, appeared to ask my commands. They were certainly the civilest people alive; if I but looked, they flew to the place where I cast my eye; every motion of mine sent them running round the whole shop for my satisfaction. I informed them that I wanted what was good, and they shewed me not less than forty pieces, and each was better than the former; the prettiest pattern in nature, and the fittest in the world for night-caps. 'My very good friend,' said I to the mercer, 'you must not 'pretend to instruct me in silks, I know 'these in particular to be no better than 'your mere flimsy Bungees.'—'That 'may be,' cried the mercer, who I afterwards found had never contradicted a man in his life; 'I can't pretend to 'say but they may; but, I can assure 'you, my Lady Trail has had a sacque 'from this piece this very morning.'—'But, friend,' said I, 'though my lady 'has chosen a sacque from it, I see no 'necessity that I should wear it for a 'night-cap.'—'That may be,' returned he again; 'yet, what becomes

* Vultus nimium lubricus aspici. Hor.

'a pretty

'a pretty lady, will at any time look 'well on a handsome gentleman.' This short compliment was thrown in so very seasonably upon my ugly face, that even though I disliked the silk, I desired him to cut me off the pattern of a night-cap.

While this business was consigned to his journeyman, the master himself took down some pieces of silk still finer than any I had yet seen, and spreading them before me—'There!' cries he, 'there's 'beauty! my Lord Snakeskin has be-'spoke the fellow to this for the birth-'night this very morning; it would 'look charmingly in waistcoats.'—'But 'I don't want a waistcoat,' replied I. 'Not want a waistcoat!' returned the mercer; 'then I would advise you to 'buy one; when waistcoats are want-'ed, you may depend upon it they will 'come dear. Always buy before you 'want, and you are sure to be well 'used, as they say in Cheapside.' There was so much justice in his advice, that I could not refuse taking it; besides, the silk, which was really a good one, encreased the temptation, so I gave orders for that too.

As I was waiting to have my bargains measured and cut, which, I know not how, they executed but slowly; during the interval, the mercer entertained me with the modern manner of some of the nobility receiving company in their morning-gowns: 'Perhaps, Sir,' adds he, 'you have a mind to see what kind 'of silk is universally worn?' Without waiting for my reply, he spreads a piece before me, which might be reckoned beautiful even in China. 'If the no-'bility,' continues he, 'were to know 'I sold this to any, under a Right Ho-'nourable, I should certainly lose their 'custom; you see, my Lord, it is at 'once rich, tasty, and quite the thing.' —'I am no lord,' interrupted I. 'I 'beg pardon,' cried he; 'but be pleased 'to remember, when you intend buy-'ing a morning-gown, that you had an 'offer from me of something worth mo-'ney. Conscience, Sir, conscience, is 'my way of dealing; you may buy a 'morning-gown now, or you may stay 'till they become dearer and less fa-'shionable; but it is not my business to 'advise.' In short, my reverend Fum, he persuaded me to buy a morning-gown also; and would probably have persuaded me to have bought half the goods in his shop, if I had stayed long enough, or was furnished with sufficient money.

Upon returning home, I could not help reflecting, with some astonishment, how this very man, with such a confined education and capacity, was yet capable of turning me as he thought proper, and moulding me to his inclinations! I knew he was only answering his own purposes, even while he attempted to appear solicitous about mine; yet, by a voluntary infatuation, a sort of passion compounded of vanity and good-nature, I walked into the snare with my eyes open, and put myself to future pain, in order to give him immediate pleasure. The wisdom of the ignorant somewhat resembles the instinct of animals; it is diffused in but a very narrow sphere, but within that circle it acts with vigour, uniformity, and success. Adieu.

LETTER LXXVIII.

FROM THE SAME.

FROM my former accounts, you may be apt to fancy the English the most ridiculous people under the sun. They are, indeed, ridiculous: yet, every other nation in Europe is equally so; each laughs at each, and the Asiatic at all.

I may, upon another occasion, point out what is most strikingly absurd in other countries; I shall at present confine myself only to France. The first national peculiarity a traveller meets upon entering that kingdom, is an odd sort of staring vivacity in every eye, not excepting even the children; the people, it seems, have got it into their heads that they have more wit than others, and so stare in order to look smart.

I know not how it happens, but there appears a sickly delicacy in the faces of their finest women. This may have introduced the use of paint, and paint produces wrinkles; so that a fine lady shall look like a hag at twenty-three. But as in some measure they never appear young, so it may be equally asserted,

that they actually think themselves never old; a gentle Miss shall prepare for new conquests at sixty; shall hobble a rigadoon when she can scarce walk without a crutch; she shall affect the girl, play her fan and her eyes, and talk of sentiments, bleeding hearts, and expiring for love, when actually dying with age. Like a departing philosopher, she attempts to make her last moments the most brilliant of her life.

Their civility to strangers is what they are chiefly proud of; and to confess sincerely, their beggars are the very politest beggars I ever knew: in other places, a traveller is addressed with a piteous whine, or a sturdy solemnity; but a French beggar shall ask your charity with a very genteel bow, and thank you for it with a smile and a shrug.

Another instance of this people's breeding I must not forget. An Englishman would not speak his native language in a company of foreigners, where he was sure that none understood him; a travelling Hottentot himself would be silent, if acquainted only with the language of his country: but a Frenchman shall talk to you whether you understand his language or not; never troubling his head whether you have learned French, still he keeps up the conversation, fixes his eye full in your face, and asks a thousand questions, which he answers himself for want of a more satisfactory reply.

But their civility to foreigners is not half so great as their admiration of themselves. Every thing that belongs to them and their nation is great; magnificent beyond expression; quite romantic! every garden is a paradise, every hovel a palace, and every woman an angel. They shut their eyes close, throw their mouths wide open, and cry out in rapture: 'Sacre!—What beauty! 'O Ciel!—what taste! Mort de ma vie! '—what grandeur! was ever any people like ourselves? We are the nation 'of men, and all the rest no better than 'two-legged barbarians.'

I fancy the French would make the best cooks in the world, if they had but meat; as it is, they can dress you out five different dishes from a nettle-top, seven from a dock-leaf, and twice as many from a frog's haunches; these eat prettily enough when one is a little used to them, are easy of digestion, and seldom overload the stomach with crudities. They seldom dine under seven hot dishes; it is true, indeed, with all this magnificence, they seldom spread a cloth before the guests; but in that I cannot be angry with them; since those who have got no linen on their backs, may very well be excused for wanting it upon their tables.

Even religion itself loses it's solemnity among them. Upon their roads, at about every five miles distance, you see an image of the Virgin Mary, dressed up in grim head-cloaths, painted cheeks, and an old red petticoat; before her a lamp is often kept burning, at which, with the Saint's permission, I have frequently lighted my pipe. Instead of the Virgin, you are sometimes presented with a Crucifix, at other times with a wooden Saviour, fitted out in compleat garniture, with sponge, spear, nails, pincers, hammer, bees-wax and vinegar-bottle. Some of these images, I have been told, came down from heaven; if so, in heaven they have but bungling workmen.

In passing through their towns, you frequently see the men sitting at the doors knitting stockings, while the care of cultivating the ground and pruning the vines fall to the women. This is perhaps the reason why the fair-sex are granted some peculiar privileges in this country; particularly, when they can get horses, of riding without a side-saddle.

But I begin to think you may find this description pert and dull enough; perhaps it is so, yet in general, it is the manner in which the French usually describe foreigners; and it is but just to *force* a part of that ridicule back upon them, which they attempt to lavish on others. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER LXXIX.

FROM THE SAME.

THE two theatres, which ſerve to amuſe the citizens here, are again opened for the winter. The mimetic troops, different from thoſe of the ſtate, begin their campaign when all the others quit the field; and at a time when the Europeans ceaſe to deſtroy each other in reality, they are entertained with mock battles upon the ſtage.

The dancing-maſter once more ſhakes his quivering feet; the carpenter prepares his paradiſe of paſteboard; the hero reſolves to cover his forehead with braſs, and the heroine begins to ſcour up her copper tail, preparative to future operations; in ſhort, all are in motion, from the theatrical letter-carrier in yellow cloaths, to Alexander the Great that ſtands on a ſtool.

Both houſes have already commenced hoſtilities. War, open war! and no quarter received or given! Two ſinging women, like heralds, have begun the conteſt; the whole town is divided on this ſolemn occaſion; one has the fineſt pipe, the other the fineſt manner; one curteſies to the ground, the other ſalutes the audience with a ſmile; one comes on with modeſty which aſks, the other with boldneſs which extorts applauſe; one wears powder, the other has none; one has the longeſt waiſt, but the other appears moſt eaſy: all, all is important and ſerious. The town as yet perſeveres in it's neutrality; a cauſe of ſuch moment demands the moſt mature deliberation; they continue to exhibit; and it is very poſſible this conteſt may continue to pleaſe to the end of the ſeaſon.

But the Generals of either army have, as I am told, ſeveral reinforcements to lend occaſional aſſiſtance. If they produce a pair of diamond buckles at one houſe, we have a pair of eye-brows that can match them at the other. If we out-do them in our attitude, they can overcome us by a ſhrug; if we can bring more children on the ſtage, they can bring more guards in red cloaths, who ſtrut and ſhoulder their ſwords to the aſtoniſhment of every ſpectator.

They tell me here, that people frequent the theatre in order to be inſtructed as well as amuſed; I ſmile to hear the aſſertion. If I ever go to one of their play-houſes, what with trumpets, hallooing behind the ſtage, and bawling upon it, I am quite dizzy before the performance is over. If I enter the houſe with any ſentiments in my head, I am ſure to have none going away, the whole mind being filled with a dead march, a funeral proceſſion, a cat-call, a jig, or a tempeſt.

There is, perhaps, nothing more eaſy than to write properly for the Engliſh theatre; I am amazed that none are apprenticed to the trade. The author, when well acquainted with the value of thunder and lightning; when verſed in all the myſtery of ſcene-ſhifting, and trap-doors; when ſkilled in the proper periods to introduce a wire-walker, or a water-fall; when inſtructed in every actor's peculiar talent, and capable of adapting his ſpeeches to the ſuppoſed excellence; when thus inſtructed, knows all that can give a modern audience pleaſure. One player ſhines in an exclamation, another in a groan, a third in a horror, a fourth in a ſtart, a fifth in a ſmile, a ſixth faints, and a ſeventh figets round the ſtage with peculiar vivacity; that piece, therefore, will ſucceed beſt, where each has a proper opportunity of ſhining; the actor's buſineſs is not ſo much to adapt himſelf to the poet, as the poet's to adapt himſelf to the actor.

The great ſecret, therefore, of tragedy-writing, at preſent, is a perfect acquaintance with theatrical *ah*'s and *oh*'s; a certain number of theſe interſperſed with *gods! tortures! racks!* and *damnation!* ſhall diſtort every actor almoſt into convulſions, and draw tears from every ſpectator; a proper uſe of theſe will infallibly fill the whole houſe with applauſe. But, above all, a whining ſcene muſt ſtrike moſt forcibly. I would adviſe, from my preſent knowledge of the audience, the two favourite players of the town to introduce a ſcene of this ſort in every play. Towards the middle of the laſt act, I would have them enter with wild looks, and out-ſpread arms;

arms; there is no neceſſity for ſpeaking; they are only to groan at each other; they muſt vary the tones of exclamation and deſpair through the whole theatrical gamut, wring their figures into every ſhape of diſtreſs; and when their calamities have drawn a proper quantity of tears from the ſympathetic ſpectators, they may go off in dumb ſolemnity at different doors, claſping their hands, or ſlapping their pocket-holes: this, which may be called a tragic pantomime, will anſwer every purpoſe of moving the paſſions, as well as words could have done, and it muſt ſave thoſe expences which go to reward an author.

All modern plays that would keep the audience alive, muſt be conceived in this manner; and, indeed, many a modern play is made up on no other plan. This is the merit that lifts up the heart, like opium, into a rapture of inſenſibility, and can diſmiſs the mind from all the fatigue of thinking: this is the eloquence that ſhines in many a long forgotten ſcene, which has been reckoned exceſſive fine upon acting; this the lightning that flaſhes no leſs in the Hyperbolical tyrant, 'who breakfaſts on the 'wind,' than in little Norval, 'as 'harmleſs as the babe unborn.' Adieu.

LETTER LXXX.

FROM THE SAME.

I Have always regarded the ſpirit of mercy which appears in the Chineſe laws with admiration. An order for the execution of a criminal is carried from court by ſlow journeys of ſix miles a day, but a pardon is ſent down with the moſt rapid diſpatch. If five ſons of the ſame father be guilty of the ſame offence, one of them is forgiven, in order to continue the family, and comfort his aged parents in their decline.

Similar to this, there is a ſpirit of mercy breathes through the laws of England, which ſome erroneouſly endeavour to ſuppreſs; the laws, however, ſeem unwilling to puniſh the offender, or to furniſh the officers of juſtice with every means of acting with ſeverity. Thoſe who arreſt debtors are denied the uſe of arms; the nightly watch is permitted to repreſs the diſorders of the drunken citizens only with clubs; juſtice, in ſuch a caſe, ſeems to hide her terrors, and permits ſome offenders to eſcape, rather than load any with a puniſhment diſproportioned to the crime.

Thus it is the glory of an Engliſhman, that he is not only governed by laws, but that theſe are alſo tempered by mercy. A country reſtrained by ſevere laws, and thoſe too executed with ſeverity, (as in Japan) is under the moſt terrible ſpecies of tyranny: a royal tyrant is generally dreadful to the great, but numerous penal laws grind every rank of people, and chiefly thoſe leaſt able to reſiſt oppreſſion, the poor.

It is very poſſible thus for a people to become ſlaves to laws of their own enacting, as the Athenians were to thoſe of Draco. 'It might firſt happen,' ſays the hiſtorian, 'that men, with peculiar 'talents for villainy, attempted to evade 'the ordinances already eſtabliſhed; 'their practices, therefore, ſoon brought 'on a new law levelled againſt them; 'but the ſame degree of cunning which 'had taught the knave to evade the for'mer ſtatutes, taught him to evade the 'latter alſo; he flew to new ſhifts, while 'juſtice purſued with new ordinances; 'ſtill, however, he kept his proper diſ'tance; and whenever one crime was 'judged penal by the ſtate, he left com'mitting it, in order to practiſe ſome 'unforbidden ſpecies of villainy. Thus 'the criminal, againſt whom the threat'enings were denounced, always eſcap'ed free; while the ſimple rogue alone 'felt the rigour of juſtice. In the mean 'time, penal laws became numerous; 'almoſt every perſon in the ſtate, un'knowingly, at different times offend'ed, and was every moment ſubject to 'a malicious proſecution.' In fact, penal laws, inſtead of preventing crimes, are generally enacted after the commiſſion; inſtead of repreſſing the growth of ingenious villainy, only multiply deceit, by putting it upon new ſhifts and expedients of practiſing with impunity.

Such laws, therefore, reſemble the guards which are ſometimes impoſed upon tributary princes, apparently indeed

deed to secure them from danger, but in reality to confirm their captivity.

Penal laws, it must be allowed, secure property in a state, but they also diminish personal security in the same proportion: there is no positive law, how equitable soever, that may not be sometimes capable of injustice. When a law enacted to make theft punishable with death, happens to be equitably executed, it can at best only guard our possessions; but when by favour or ignorance justice pronounces a wrong verdict, it then attacks our lives, since, in such a case, the whole community suffers with the innocent victim; if therefore, in order to secure the effects of one man, I should make a law which may take away the life of another, in such a case, to attain a smaller good, I am guilty of a greater evil; to secure society in the possession of a bauble, I render a real and valuable possession precarious: and, indeed, the experience of every age may serve to vindicate the assertion. No law could be more just than that called *Lesæ Majestatis*, when Rome was governed by emperors. It was but reasonable, that every conspiracy against the administration should be detected and punished; yet what terrible slaughters succeeded in consequence of it's enacting; proscriptions, stranglings, poisonings, in almost every family of distinction; yet all done in a legal way, every criminal had his trial, and lost his life by a majority of witnesses.

And such will ever be the case, where punishments are numerous, and where a weak, vicious, but above all, where a mercenary magistrate is concerned in their execution; such a man desires to see penal laws increased, since he too frequently has it in his power to turn them into instruments of extortion: in such hands, the more laws, the wider means, not of satisfying justice, but of satiating avarice.

A mercenary magistrate, who is rewarded in proportion, not to his integrity, but to the number he convicts, must be a person of the most unblemished character, or he will lean on the side of cruelty; and when once the work of injustice is begun, it is impossible to tell how far it will proceed. It is said of the Hyena, that, naturally, it is no way ravenous; but when once it has tasted human flesh, it becomes the most voracious animal of the forest, and continues to persecute mankind ever after. A corrupt magistrate may be considered as a human Hyena; he begins, perhaps, by a private snap, he goes on to a morsel among friends, he proceeds to a meal in public, from a meal he advances to a surfeit, and at last sucks blood like a vampyre.

Not into such hands should the administration of justice be entrusted, but to those who know how to reward as well as to punish. It was a fine saying of Nangfu the emperor, who, being told that his enemies had raised an insurrection in one of the distant provinces—'Come, then, my friends,' said he, 'follow me, and I promise you that we 'shall quickly destroy them.' He marched forward, and the rebels submitted upon his approach. All now thought that he would take the most signal revenge, but were surprized to see the captives treated with mildness and humanity. 'How!' cries his first minister, 'is this the manner in which you 'fulfil your promise? Your royal word 'was given that your enemies should 'be destroyed, and behold, you have 'pardoned all, and even caressed some!' —'I promised,' replied the emperor, with a generous air, 'to *destroy* my 'enemies; I have fulfilled my word, 'for see they are enemies no longer; I 'have made *friends* of them.'

This, could it always succeed, were the true method of destroying the enemies of a state: well it were if rewards and mercy alone could regulate the commonwealth; but since punishments are sometimes necessary, let them at least be rendered terrible, by being executed but seldom; and let Justice lift her sword, rather to terrify, than revenge. Adieu.

LETTER LXXXI.

FROM THE SAME.

I Have as yet given you but a ſhort and imperfect deſcription of the Ladies of England. Woman, my friend, is a ſubject not eaſily underſtood, even in China; what, therefore, can be expected from my knowledge of the ſex, in a country where they are univerſally allowed to be riddles, and I but a ſtranger?

To confeſs a truth, I was afraid to begin the deſcription, leſt the ſex ſhould undergo ſome new revolution before it was finiſhed; and my picture ſhould thus become old, before it could well be ſaid to have ever been new. To-day they are lifted upon ſtilts, to-morrow they lower their heels and raiſe their heads; their cloaths at one time are bloated out with whalebone; at preſent they have laid their hoops aſide, and are become as ſlim as mermaids. All, all is in a ſtate of continual fluctuation, from the Mandarine's wife, who rattles through the ſtreets in her chariot, to the humble ſempſtreſs, who clatters over the pavement in iron-ſhod pattens.

What chiefly diſtinguiſhes the ſex, at preſent, is the train. As a lady's quality or faſhion was once determined here by the circumference of her hoop, both are now meaſured by the length of her tail. Women of moderate fortunes are contented with tails moderately long; but ladies of true taſte and diſtinction ſet no bounds to their ambition in this particular. I am told the Lady Mayoreſs, on days of ceremony, carries one longer than a bell wether of Bantam, whoſe tail, you know, is trundled along in a wheel-barrow.

Sun of China, what contradictions do we find in this ſtrange world! Not only the people of different countries think in oppoſition to each other, but the inhabitants of a ſingle iſland are often found inconſiſtent with themſelves. Would you believe it? this very people, my Fum, who are ſo fond of ſeeing their women with long tails, at the ſame time dock their horſes to the very rump!!!

But you may eaſily gueſs that I am no way diſpleaſed with a faſhion which tends to encreaſe a demand for the commodities of the Eaſt, and is ſo very beneficial to the country in which I was born. Nothing can be better calculated to encreaſe the price of ſilk than the preſent manner of dreſſing. A lady's train is not bought but at ſome expence; and after it has ſwept the public walks for a very few evenings, is fit to be worn no longer: more ſilk muſt be bought in order to repair the breach; and ſome ladies of peculiar œconomy are thus found to patch up their tails eight or ten times in a ſeaſon. This unneceſſary conſumption may introduce poverty here, but then we ſhall be the richer for it in China.

The man in black, who is a profeſſed enemy to this manner of ornamenting the tail, aſſures me there are numberleſs inconveniencies attending it, and that a lady dreſſed up to the faſhion is as much a cripple as any in Nankin. But his chief indignation is levelled at thoſe who dreſs in this manner, without a proper fortune to ſupport it. He aſſures me, that he has known ſome who would have a tail, though they wanted a petticoat; and others who, without any other pretenſions, fancied they became ladies merely from the addition of three ſuperfluous yards of ragged ſilk. 'I know a thrifty good woman,' continues he, 'who, thinking herſelf obliged to carry a train like her betters, never walks from home without the uneaſy apprehenſions of wearing it out too ſoon; every excurſion ſhe makes gives her new anxiety; and her train is every bit as importunate, and wounds her peace as much as the bladder we ſometimes ſee tied to the tail of a cat.'

Nay, he ventures to affirm, that a train may often bring a lady into the moſt critical circumſtances: 'For ſhould a rude fellow,' ſays he, 'offer to come up to raviſh a kiſs, and the lady attempt to avoid it, in retiring ſhe muſt neceſſarily tread upon her train, and thus fall fairly upon her back; by which means, every one knows—her cloaths may be ſpoiled.'

The ladies here make no ſcruple to laugh

laugh at the ſmallneſs of a Chineſe ſlipper; but I fancy our wives at China would have a more real cauſe of laughter, could they but ſee the immoderate length of an European train. Head of Confucius! to view a human being crippling herſelf with a great unweildy tail, for our diverſion! Backward ſhe cannot go; forward ſhe muſt move, but ſlowly; and if ever ſhe attempts to turn round, it muſt be in a circle not ſmaller than that deſcribed by the wheeling crocodile, when it would face an aſſailant. And yet, to think that all this confers importance and majeſty! to think that a lady acquires additional reſpect from fifteen yards of trailing taffety! I cannot contain—Ha! ha! ha! This is certainly a remnant of European barbarity: the female Tartar, dreſſed in ſheep-ſkins, is in far more convenient drapery. Their own writers have ſometimes inveighed againſt the abſurdity of this faſhion; but perhaps it has never been ridiculed ſo well as upon the Italian theatre, where Paſquarielo, being engaged to attend on the Counteſs of Fernambroco, having one of his hands employed in carrying her muff, and the other her lap-dog, he bears her train majeſtically along, by ſticking it in the waiſtband of his breeches.

Adieu.

LETTER LXXXII.

FROM THE SAME.

A Diſpute has for ſome time divided the philoſophers of Europe; it is debated, whether arts and ſciences are more ſerviceable or prejudicial to mankind? They who maintain the cauſe of literature, endeavour to prove their uſefulneſs, from the impoſſibility of a large number of men ſubſiſting in a ſmall tract of country without them; from the pleaſure which attends the acquiſition; and from the influence of knowledge in promoting practical morality.

They who maintain the oppoſite opinion, diſplay the happineſs and innocence of thoſe uncultivated nations who live without learning; urge the numerous vices which are to be found only in poliſhed ſociety; enlarge upon the oppreſſion, the cruelty, and the blood which muſt neceſſarily be ſhed, in order to cement civil ſociety; and inſiſt upon the happy equality of conditions in a barbarous ſtate, preferable to the unnatural ſubordination of a more refined conſtitution.

This diſpute, which has already given ſo much employment to ſpeculative indolence, has been managed with much ardour, and (not to ſuppreſs our ſentiments) with but little ſagacity. They who inſiſt that the ſciences are uſeful in *refined* ſociety are certainly right, and they who maintain that *barbarous* nations are more happy without them, are right alſo; but when one ſide, for this reaſon, attempts to prove them as univerſally uſeful to the ſolitary barbarian, as to the native of a crouded commonwealth; or when the other endeavours to baniſh them as prejudicial to all ſociety, even from populous ſtates, as well as from the inhabitants of the wilderneſs, they are both wrong; ſince that knowledge which makes the happineſs of a refined European, would be a torment to the precarious tenant of an Aſiatic wild.

Let me, to prove this, tranſport the imagination for a moment to the midſt of a foreſt in Siberia. There we behold the inhabitant, poor indeed, but equally fond of happineſs with the moſt refined philoſopher of China. The earth lies uncultivated and uninhabited for miles around him; his little family and he the ſole and undiſputed poſſeſſors. In ſuch circumſtances, Nature and Reaſon will induce him to prefer a hunter's life to that of cultivating the earth. He will certainly adhere to that manner of living which is carried on at the ſmalleſt expence of labour, and that food which is moſt agreeable to the appetite; he will prefer indolent, though precarious luxury, to a laborious, though permanent competence; and a knowledge of his own happineſs will determine him to perſevere in native barbarity.

In like manner, his happineſs will incline him to bind himſelf by no law. Laws are made in order to ſecure preſent property; but he is poſſeſſed of no property which he is afraid to loſe, and deſires no more than will be ſufficient to

ſuſtain

sustain him: to enter into compacts with others, would be undergoing a voluntary obligation without the expectance of any reward. He and his countrymen are tenants, not rivals, in the same inexhaustible forest; the encreased possessions of one by no means diminishes the expectations arising from equal assiduity in another; there are no need of laws, therefore, to repress ambition, where there can be no mischief attending it's most boundless gratifications.

Our solitary Siberian will, in like manner, find the sciences not only entirely useless in directing his practice, but disgusting even in speculation. In every contemplation, our curiosity must be first excited by the *appearances* of things, before our reason undergoes the fatigue of investigating the *causes*. Some of those appearances are produced by experiment, others by minute enquiry; some arise from a knowledge of foreign climates, and others from an intimate study of our own. But there are few objects, in comparison, which present themselves to the inhabitant of a barbarous country; the game he hunts, or the transient cottage he builds, make up the chief objects of his concern; his curiosity, therefore, must be proportionably less; and if that is diminished, the reasoning faculty will be diminished in proportion.

Besides, sensual enjoyment adds wings to curiosity. We consider few objects with ardent attention, but those which have some connection with our wishes, our pleasures, or our necessities. A desire of enjoyment first interests our passions in the pursuit, points out the object of investigation, and reason then comments where sense has led the way. An encrease in the number of our enjoyments, therefore, necessarily produces an encrease of scientific research; but in countries where almost every enjoyment is wanting, reason there seems destitute of it's great inspirer, and speculation is the business of fools when it becomes it's own reward.

The barbarous Siberian is too wise, therefore, to exhaust his time in quest of knowledge, which neither curiosity prompts, nor pleasure impels, him to pursue. When told of the exact admeasurement of a degree upon the equator at Quito, he feels no pleasure in the account; when informed that such a discovery tends to promote navigation and commerce, he finds himself no way interested in either. A discovery which some have pursued at the hazard of their lives, affects him with neither astonishment nor pleasure. He is satisfied with thoroughly understanding the few objects which contribute to his own felicity, he knows the properest places where to lay the snare for the sable, and discerns the value of furs with more than European sagacity. More extended knowledge would only serve to render him unhappy; it might lend a ray to shew him the misery of his situation, but could not guide him in his efforts to avoid it. Ignorance is the happiness of the poor.

The misery of a being endowed with sentiments above it's capacity of fruition, is most admirably described in one of the fables of Locman the Indian moralist.—'An elephant that had been peculiarly serviceable in fighting the battles of Wistnow, was ordered by the god to wish for whatever he thought proper, and the desire should be attended with immediate gratification. The elephant thanked his benefactor on bended knees, and desired to be endowed with the reason and the faculties of a man. Wistnow was sorry to hear the foolish request, and endeavoured to dissuade him from his misplaced ambition; but finding it to no purpose, gave him at last such a portion of wisdom as could correct even the Zendavesta of Zoroaster. The reasoning elephant went away rejoicing in his new acquisition; and though his body still retained it's ancient form, he found his appetites and passions entirely altered. He first considered, that it would not only be more comfortable, but also more becoming, to wear cloaths; but, unhappily, he had no method of making them himself, nor had he the use of speech to demand them from others; and this was the first time he felt real anxiety. He soon perceived how much more elegantly men were fed than he, therefore he began to loath his usual food, and longed for those delicacies which adorn the tables of princes; but here again he found it impossible to be satisfied; for though he could easily obtain flesh, yet he found it impossible to dress it in any degree of perfection. In short, every pleasure that contributed to the felicity of mankind, served only to render him more miserable, as he found himself utterly deprived of the

power

power of enjoyment. In this manner he led a repining, discontented life, detesting himself, and displeased with his ill-judged ambition; till at last his benefactor, Wistnow, taking compassion on his forlorn situation, restored him to the ignorance and the happiness which he was originally formed to enjoy.'

No, my friend, to attempt to introduce the sciences into a nation of wandering barbarians, is only to render them more miserable than even Nature designed they should be. A life of simplicity is best fitted to a state of solitude.

The great law-giver of Russia attempted to improve the desolate inhabitants of Siberia, by sending among them some of the politest men of Europe. The consequence has shewn, that the country was as yet unfit to receive them; they languished, for a time, with a sort of exotic malady; every day degenerated from themselves; and at last, instead of rendering the country more polite, they conformed to the soil, and put on barbarity.

No, my friend, in order to make the sciences useful in any country, it must first become populous; the inhabitant must go through the different stages of hunter, shepherd, and husbandman: then, when property becomes valuable, and consequently gives cause for injustice; then, when laws are appointed to repress injury, and secure possession; when men, by the sanction of those laws, become possessed of superfluity; when luxury is thus introduced, and demands it's continual supply; then it is that the sciences become necessary and useful; the state then cannot subsist without them; they must then be introduced, at once to teach men to draw the greatest possible quantity of pleasure from circumscribed possession, and to restrain them within the bounds of moderate enjoyment.

The sciences are not the cause of luxury, but it's consequence; and this destroyer thus brings with it an antidote which resists the virulence of it's own poison. By asserting that luxury introduces the sciences, we assert a truth; but if, with those who reject the utility of learning, we assert that the sciences also introduce luxury, we shall be at once false, absurd, and ridiculous.

Adieu.

LETTER LXXXIII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO HINGPO, BY THE WAY OF MOSCOW.

YOU are now arrived at an age, my son, when pleasure dissuades from application; but rob not, by present gratification, all the succeeding period of life of it's happiness. Sacrifice a little pleasure at first to the expectance of greater. The study of a few years will make the rest of life compleatly easy.

But instead of continuing the subject myself, take the following instructions borrowed from a modern philosopher of China*. 'He who has begun his fortune by study, will certainly confirm it by perseverance. The love of books damps the passion for pleasure, and when this passion is once extinguished, life is then cheaply supported: thus a man, being possessed of more than he wants, can never be subject to great disappointments, and avoids all those meannesses which indigence sometimes unavoidably produces.

'There is unspeakable pleasure attending the life of a voluntary student. The first time I read an excellent book, it is to me just as if I had gained a new friend. When I read over a book I have perused before, it resembles the meeting with an old one. We ought to lay hold of every incident in life for improvement, the trifling as well as the important. It is not one diamond alone which gives lustre to another, a common coarse stone is also employed for that purpose. Thus

* A translation of this passage may also be seen in Du Halde, Vol. II. Fol. p. 47, and 58. This extract will at least serve to shew that fondness for humour which appears in the writings of the Chinese.

'I ought

'I ought to draw advantage from the 'insults and contempt I meet with from 'a worthless fellow. His brutality 'ought to induce me to self-examination, and correct every blemish that 'may have given rise to his calumny.

'Yet with all the pleasures and profits which are generally produced by 'learning, parents often find it difficult 'to induce their children to study. 'They often seem dragged to what 'wears the appearance of application. 'Thus being dilatory in the beginning, 'all future hopes of eminence are entirely cut off. If they find themselves 'obliged to write two lines more polite 'than ordinary, their pencil then seems 'as heavy as a mill-stone, and they spend 'ten years in turning two or three periods with propriety.

'These persons are most at a loss 'when a banquet is almost over; the 'plate and the dice go round, that the 'number of little verses which each is 'obliged to repeat may be determined 'by chance. The booby, when it 'comes to his turn, appears quite stupid and insensible. The company divert themselves with his confusion; 'and sneers, winks, and whispers, are 'circulated at his expence. As for 'him, he opens a pair of large heavy 'eyes, stares at all about him, and even 'offers to join in the laugh, without ever 'considering himself as the burthen of 'all their good humour.

'But it is of no importance to read 'much, except you be regular in your 'reading. If it be interrupted for any 'considerable time, it can never be attended with proper improvement. 'There are some who study for one day 'with intense application, and repose 'themselves for ten days after. But 'wisdom is a coquet, and must be courted with unabating assiduity.

'It was a saying of the ancients, that 'a man never opens a book without 'reaping some advantage by it. I say 'with them, that every book can serve 'to make us more expert, except romances, and these are no better than 'instruments of debauchery. They are 'dangerous fictions, where love is the 'ruling passion.

'The most indecent strokes there 'pass for turns of wit; intrigue and 'criminal liberties for gallantry and politeness. Assignations, and even villainy, are put in such strong lights, 'as may inspire, even grown men, with 'the strongest passion; how much more 'therefore ought the youth of either sex 'to dread them, whose reason is so 'weak, and whose hearts are so susceptible of passion?

'To slip in by a back-door, or leap 'a wall, are accomplishments that, when 'handsomely set off, enchant a young 'heart. It is true, the plot is commonly wound up by a marriage, concluded with the consent of parents, 'and adjusted by every ceremony prescribed by law. But as in the body 'of the work there are many passages 'that offend good morals, overthrow 'laudable customs, violate the laws, 'and destroy the duties most essential to 'society, virtue is thereby exposed to 'the most dangerous attacks.

'But, say some, the authors of these 'romances have nothing in view, but 'to represent vice punished and virtue 'rewarded. Granted. But will the 'greater number of readers take notice 'of these punishments and rewards? 'Are not their minds carried to something else? Can it be imagined that 'the heart with which the author inspires the love of virtue, can overcome 'that crowd of thoughts which sway 'them to licentiousness? To be able to 'inculcate virtue by so leaky a vehicle, 'the author must be a philosopher of 'the first rank. But in our age we can 'find but few first-rate philosophers.

'Avoid such performances where vice 'assumes the face of virtue; seek wisdom and knowledge without ever 'thinking you have found them. A 'man is wise, while he continues in the 'pursuit of wisdom; but when he once 'fancies that he has found the object 'of his enquiry, he then becomes a 'fool. Learn to pursue virtue from the 'man that is blind, who never makes a 'step without first examining the ground 'with his staff.

'The world is like a vast sea, mankind like a vessel sailing on it's tempestuous bosom. Our prudence is it's 'sails, the sciences serve us for oars, 'good or bad fortune are the favourable 'or contrary winds, and judgment is 'the rudder; without this last, the vessel is tossed by every billow, and will 'find shipwreck in every breeze. In a 'word, obscurity and indigence are the

'parents

'parents of vigilance and œconomy; 'vigilance and œconomy of riches and 'honour; riches and honour of pride 'and luxury; pride and luxury of im'purity and idleneſs; and impurity and 'idleneſs again produce indigence and 'obſcurity. Such are the revolutions 'of life.' Adieu.

LETTER LXXXIV.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

I Fancy the character of a poet is in every country the ſame, fond of enjoying the preſent, careleſs of the future; his converſation that of a man of ſenſe, his actions thoſe of a fool! of fortitude able to ſtand unmoved at the burſting of an earthquake, yet of ſenſibility to be affected by the breaking of a tea-cup. Such is his character; which, conſidered in every light, is the very oppoſite of that which leads to riches.

The poets of the Weſt are as remarkable for their indigence as their genius; and yet, among the numerous hoſpitals deſigned to relieve the poor, I have heard of but one erected for the benefit of decayed authors. This was founded by Pope Urban VIII. and called the Retreat of Incurables, intimating, that it was equally impoſſible to reclaim the patients, who ſued for reception, from poverty, or from poetry. To be ſincere, were I to ſend you an account of the lives of the Weſtern poets, either ancient or modern, I fancy you would think me employed in collecting materials for an hiſtory of human wretchedneſs.

Homer is the firſt poet and beggar of note among the ancients; he was blind, and ſung his ballads about the ſtreets; but it is obſerved, that his mouth was more frequently filled with verſes than with bread. Plautus, the comic poet, was better off; he had two trades; he was a poet for his diverſion, and helped to turn a mill in order to gain a livelihood. Terence was a ſlave; and Boethius died in a jail.

Among the Italians, Paulo Burgheſe, almoſt as good a poet as Taſſo, knew fourteen different trades, and yet died becauſe he could get employment in none. Taſſo himſelf, who had the moſt amiable character of all poets, has often been obliged to borrow a crown from ſome friend, in order to pay for a month's ſubſiſtence; he has left us a pretty ſonnet, addreſſed to his cat, in which he begs the light of her eyes to write by, being too poor to afford himſelf a candle. But Bentivoglio, poor Bentivoglio! chiefly demands our pity. His comedies will laſt with the Italian language: he diſſipated a noble fortune in acts of charity and benevolence; but falling into miſery in his old age, was refuſed to be admitted into an hoſpital which he himſelf had erected.

In Spain, it is ſaid, the great Cervantes died of hunger; and it is certain, that the famous Camoens ended his days in an hoſpital.

If we turn to France, we ſhall there find even ſtronger inſtances of the ingratitude of the public. Vaugelas, one of the politeſt writers, and one of the honeſteſt men of his time, was ſirnamed the Owl, from his being obliged to keep within all day, and venture out only by night, through fear of his creditors. His laſt will is very remarkable. After having bequeathed all his worldly ſubſtance to the diſcharging his debts, he goes on thus: 'But as there ſtill may 'remain ſome creditors unpaid, even 'after all that I have ſhall be diſpoſed 'of, in ſuch a caſe, it is my laſt will, 'that my body ſhould be ſold to the 'ſurgeons to the beſt advantage, and 'that the purchaſe ſhould go to the diſ'charging thoſe debts which I owe to 'ſociety; ſo that if I could not while 'living, at leaſt when dead, I may be 'uſeful.'

Caſſander was one of the greateſt geniuſes of his time; yet all his merit could not procure him a bare ſubſiſtence. Being by degrees, driven into an hatred of all mankind, from the little pity he found amongſt them, he even ventured at laſt ungratefully to impute his calamities to Providence. In his laſt agonies, when the prieſt entreated

treated him to rely on the juſtice of Heaven, and aſk mercy from him that made him—' If God,' replies he, ' has ſhewn ' me no juſtice here, what reaſon have ' I to expect any from him hereafter?' But being anſwered, that a ſuſpenſion of juſtice was no argument that ſhould induce us to doubt of it's reality—' Let ' me entreat you,' continued his confeſſor, ' by all that is dear, to be reconciled to God, your Father, your ' Maker, and Friend.'—' No,' replied the exaſperated wretch, ' you know the ' manner in which he left me to live;' (and pointing to the ſtraw on which he was ſtretched) ' and you ſee the manner ' in which he leaves me to die!'

But the ſufferings of the poet in other countries is nothing, when compared to his diſtreſſes here: the names of Spencer and Otway, Butler and Dryden, are every day mentioned as a national reproach; ſome of them lived in a ſtate of precarious indigence, and others literally died of hunger.

At preſent, the few poets of England no longer depend on the great for ſubſiſtence; they have now no other patrons but the public; and the public, collectively conſidered, is a good and a generous maſter. It is, indeed, too frequently miſtaken as to the merits of every candidate for favour; but, to make amends, it is never miſtaken long. A performance indeed may be forced for a time into reputation; but, deſtitute of real merit, it ſoon ſinks; time, the touchſtone of what is truly valuable, will ſoon diſcover the fraud, and an author ſhould never arrogate to himſelf any ſhare of ſucceſs, till his works have been read at leaſt ten years with ſatiſfaction.

A man of letters at preſent, whoſe works are valuable, is perfectly ſenſible of their value. Every polite member of the community, by buying what he writes, contributes to reward him. The ridicule, therefore, of living in a garret, might have been wit in the laſt age, but continues ſuch no longer, becauſe no longer true. A writer of real merit now may eaſily be rich, if his heart be ſet only on fortune: and for thoſe who have no merit, it is but fit that ſuch ſhould remain in merited obſcurity. He may now refuſe an invitation to dinner, without fearing to incur his patron's diſpleaſure, or to ſtarve by remaining at home. He may now venture to appear in company with juſt ſuch cloaths as other men generally wear, and talk even to princes, with all the conſcious ſuperiority of wiſdom. Though he cannot boaſt of fortune here, yet he can bravely aſſert the dignity of independence. Adieu.

LETTER LXXXV.

FROM THE SAME.

I Have intereſted myſelf ſo long in all the concerns of this people, that I am almoſt become an Engliſhman; I now begin to read with pleaſure of their taking towns or gaining battles, and ſecretly wiſh diſappointment to all the enemies of Britain. Yet ſtill my regard to mankind fills me with concern for their contentions. I could wiſh to ſee the diſturbances of Europe once more amicably adjuſted: I am an enemy to nothing in this good world but war; I hate fighting between rival ſtates; I hate it between man and man; I hate fighting even between women!

I already informed you, that while Europe was at variance, we were alſo threatened from the ſtage with an irreconcileable oppoſition, and that our ſinging women were reſolved to ſing at each other to the end of the ſeaſon. O my friend, thoſe fears were juſt! They are not only determined to ſing at each other to the end of the ſeaſon; but, what is worſe, to ſing the ſame ſong; and, what is ſtill more inſupportable, to make us pay for hearing.

If they be for war, for my part, I ſhould adviſe them to have a public congreſs, and there fairly ſquall at each other. What ſignifies ſounding the trumpet of defiance at a diſtance, and calling in the town to fight their battles? I would have them come boldly into one of the moſt open and frequented ſtreets, face to face, and there try their ſkill in quavering.

However this may be, reſolved I am that

that they ſhall not touch one ſingle piece of ſilver more of mine. Though I have ears for muſic, thanks to Heaven, they are not altogether aſſes ears. What! Polly and the Pick-pocket to-night? Polly and the Pick-pocket to-morrow night? and Polly and the Pick-pocket again? I want patience. I will hear no more. My ſoul is out of tune, all jarring diſcord and confuſion. Reſt, reſt, ye dear three clinking ſhillings, in my pocket's bottom; the muſic you make is more harmonious to my ſpirit, than cat-gut, roſin, or all the nightingales that ever chirruped in petticoats.

But what raiſes my indignation to the greateſt degree, is, that this piping does not only peſter me on the ſtage, but is my puniſhment in private converſation. What is it to me, whether the *fine pipe* of one, or the *great manner* of the other, be preferable? What care I if one has a better top, or the other a nobler bottom? How am I concerned if one ſings from the ſtomach, or the other ſings with a ſnap? Yet, paltry as theſe matters are, they make a ſubject of debate wherever I go; and this muſical diſpute, eſpecially among the fair-ſex, almoſt always ends in a very unmuſical altercation.

Sure the ſpirit of contention is mixed into the very conſtitution of the people. Diviſions among the inhabitants of other countries ariſe only from their higher concerns; but ſubjects the moſt contemptible are made an affair of party here, the ſpirit is carried even into their amuſements. The very ladies, whoſe duty ſhould ſeem to allay the impetuoſity of the oppoſite ſex, become themſelves party champions, engage in the thickeſt of the fight, ſcold at each other, and ſhew their courage, even at the expence of their lovers and their beauty.

There are even a numerous ſet of poets who help to keep up the contention, and write for the ſtage. Miſtake me not, I do not mean pieces to be acted upon it, but panegyrical verſes on the performers; for that is the moſt univerſal method of writing for the ſtage at preſent. It is the buſineſs of the ſtage poet, therefore, to watch the appearance of every new player at his own houſe, and ſo come out next day with a flaunting copy of news-paper verſes. In theſe Nature and the actor may be ſet to run races, the player always coming off victorious; or Nature may miſtake him for herſelf; or old Shakeſpeare may put on his winding-ſheet and pay him a viſit; or the tuneful Nine may ſtrike up their harps in his praiſe; or, ſhould it happen to be an actreſs, Venus, the beauteous Queen of Love, and the naked Graces, are ever in waiting: the lady muſt be herſelf a goddeſs bred and born; ſhe muſt—But you ſhall have a ſpecimen of one of theſe poems, which may convey a more preciſe idea.

ON SEEING MRS. ** PERFORM IN THE CHARACTER OF ****.

TO you, bright fair, the Nine addreſs their lays,
And tune my feeble voice to ſing thy praiſe.
The heart-felt power of every charm divine,
Who can withſtand their all-commanding ſhine?
See how ſhe moves along with every grace,
While ſoul-brought tears ſteal down each ſhining face!
She ſpeaks; 'tis rapture all and nameleſs bliſs,
Ye gods, what tranſport e'er compar'd to this!
As when in Paphian groves the Queen of Love,
With fond complaint, addreſs'd the liſtening Jove,
'Twas joy, and endleſs bliſſes, all around,
And rocks forgot their hardneſs at the ſound.
Then firſt, at laſt even Jove was taken in,
And felt her charms, without diſguiſe, within.

And yet think not, my friend, that I have any particular animoſity againſt the champions who are at the head of the preſent commotion; on the contrary, I could find pleaſure in their muſic, if ſerved up at proper intervals; if I heard it only on proper occaſions, and not about it wherever I go. In fact, I could patronize them both; and, as an inſtance of my condeſcenſion in this particular, they may come and give me a ſong at my lodging, on any evening when I am at leiſure, provided they keep a becoming diſtance, and ſtand, while they continue to entertain me, with decent humility at the door.

You perceive I have not read the ſeventeen books of Chineſe ceremonies to no purpoſe. I know the proper ſhare of reſpect due to every rank in ſociety. Stage-players, fire-eaters, ſinging-women, dancing-dogs, wild-beaſts, and wire-walkers, as their efforts are exerted for our amuſement, ought not *entirely* to be deſpiſed. The laws of every country ſhould allow them to play their tricks at leaſt with impunity. They ſhould

not be branded with the ignominious appellation of vagabonds; at least, they deserve a rank in society equal to the mystery of barbers, or undertakers; and, could my influence extend so far, they should be allowed to earn even forty or fifty pounds a year, if eminent in their profession.

I am sensible, however, that you will censure me of profusion in this respect, bred up as you are in the narrow prejudices of Eastern frugality. You will undoubtedly assert, that such a stipend is too great for so useless an employment. Yet how will your surprize encrease, when told, that though the law holds them as vagabonds, many of them earn more than a thousand a year! You are amazed. There is cause for amazement. A vagabond with a thousand a year is indeed a curiosity in nature; a wonder far surpassing the flying fish, petrified crab, or travelling lobster. However, from my great love to the profession, I would willingly have them divested of part of their contempt, and part of their finery; the law should kindly take them under the wing of protection, fix them into a corporation, like that of the barbers, and abridge their ignominy and their pensions. As to their abilities in other respects, I would leave that entirely to the public, who are certainly in this case the properest judges—whether they despise them or no.

Yes, my Fum, I would abridge their pensions. A theatrical warrior, who conducts the battles of the stage, should be cooped up with the same caution as a Bantam cock that is kept for fighting. When one of those animals is taken from it's native dunghill, we retrench it both in the quantity of it's food, and the number of it's seraglio: players should in the same manner be fed, not fattened; they should be permitted to get their bread, but not eat the people's bread into the bargain; and, instead of being permitted to keep four mistresses, in conscience, they should be contented only with two.

Were stage-players thus brought into bounds, perhaps we should find their admirers less sanguine, and consequently less ridiculous in patronizing them. We should no longer be struck with the absurdity of seeing the same people, whose valour makes such a figure abroad, apostrophizing in the praise of a bouncing blockhead, and wrangling in the defence of a copper-tailed actress at home.

I shall conclude my letter with the sensible admonition of *Mê* the philosopher. 'You love harmony,' says he, 'and are charmed with music. I do 'not blame you for hearing a fine voice, 'when you are in your closet with a 'lovely parterre under your eye, or in 'the night time, while perhaps the 'moon diffuses her silver rays. But is 'a man to carry this passion so far as to 'let a company of comedians, musi'cians, and singers, grow rich upon 'his exhausted fortune? If so, he re'sembles one of those dead bodies, 'whose brains the embalmer has pick'ed out through it's ears.' Adieu.

LETTER LXXXVI.

FROM THE SAME.

Of all the places of amusement where gentlemen and ladies are entertained, I have not been yet to visit Newmarket. This, I am told, is a large field; where, upon certain occasions, three or four horses are brought together, then set a running, and that horse which runs fastest wins the wager.

This is reckoned a very polite and fashionable amusement here, much more followed by the nobility than partridge-fighting at Java, or paper kites in Madagascar. Several of the great here, I am told, understand as much of farriery as their grooms; and a horse, with any share of merit, can never want a patron among the nobility.

We have a description of this entertainment almost every day in some of the Gazettes; as for instance: 'On such 'a day the Give and Take Plate was run 'for between his Grace's Crab, his Lord'ship's Periwinkle, and Squire Smack'em's Slamerkin. All rode their own 'horses. There was the greatest con'course of nobility that has been known

'here

'here for ſeveral ſeaſons. The odds
'were in favour of Crab in the begin-
'ning; but Slamerkin, after the firſt
'heat, ſeemed to have the match hollow:
'however, it was ſoon ſeen that Peri-
'winkle improved in wind, which at
'laſt turned out accordingly; Crab was
'run to a ſtand ſtill, Slamerkin was
'knocked up, and Periwinkle was
'brought in with univerſal applauſe.' Thus, you ſee, Periwinkle received univerſal applauſe; and no doubt his lordſhip came in for ſome ſhare of that praiſe which was ſo liberally beſtowed upon Periwinkle. Sun of China! how glorious muſt the ſenator appear in his cap and leather breeches, his whip croſſed in his mouth, and thus coming to the goal amongſt the ſhouts of grooms, jockies, pimps, ſtable-bred dukes, and degraded generals!

From the deſcription of this princely amuſement, now tranſcribed, and from the great veneration I have for the characters of it's principal promoters, I make no doubt but I ſhall look upon an horſe-race with becoming reverence, pre-diſpoſed as I am by a ſimilar amuſement, of which I have lately been a ſpectator; for juſt now I happened to have an opportunity of being preſent at a Cart-race.

Whether this contention between three carts of different pariſhes was promoted by a ſubſcription among the nobility, or whether the grand jury, in council aſſembled, had glorioully combined to encourage plauſtral merit, I cannot take upon me to determine; but, certain it is, the whole was conducted with the utmoſt regularity and decorum; and the company, which made a brilliant appearance, were univerſally of opinion that the ſport was high, the running fine, and the riders influenced by no bribe.

It was run on the road from London to a village called Brentford, between a turnip-cart, a duſt-cart, and a dung-cart; each of the owners condeſcending to mount and be his own driver. The odds at ſtarting were *duſt* againſt *dung* five to four; but after half a mile's going, the knowing ones found themſelves all on the wrong ſide, and it was *turnip* againſt the field, braſs to ſilver.

Soon, however, the conteſt became more doubtful; Turnip indeed kept the way, but it was perceived that Dung had better bottom. The road re-echoed with the ſhouts of the ſpectators—'Dung 'againſt Turnip! Turnip againſt Dung!' was now the univerſal cry; neck and neck; one rode lighter, but the other had more judgment. I could not but particularly obſerve the ardour with which the fair-ſex eſpouſed the cauſe of the different riders on this occaſion; one was charmed with the unwaſhed beauties of Dung; another was captivated with the patibulary aſpect of Turnip; while, in the mean time, unfortunate gloomy Duſt, who came whipping behind, was cheared by the encouragements of ſome, and pity of all.

The contention now continued for ſome time, without a poſſibility of determining to whom victory deſigned the prize. The winning-poſt appeared in view, and he who drove the turnip-cart aſſured himſelf of ſucceſs; and ſucceſsful he might have been, had his horſe been as ambitious as he; but upon approaching a turn from the road, which led homewards, the horſe fairly ſtood ſtill, and refuſed to move a foot farther. The dung-cart had ſcarce time to enjoy this temporary triumph, when it was pitched headlong into a ditch by the way ſide, and the rider left to wallow in congenial mud. Duſt in the mean time ſoon came up; and not being far from the poſt, came in amidſt the ſhouts and acclamations of all the ſpectators, and greatly careſſed by all the quality of Brentford. Fortune was kind only to one, who ought to have been favourable to all; each had peculiar merit, each laboured hard to earn the prize, and each richly deſerved the cart he drove.

I do not know whether this deſcription may not have anticipated that which I intended giving of Newmarket. I am told there is little elſe to be ſeen even there. There may be ſome minute differences in the dreſs of the ſpectators, but none at all in their underſtandings; the quality of Brentford are as remarkable for politeneſs and delicacy as the breeders of Newmarket. The quality of Brentford drive their own carts, and the honourable fraternity of Newmarket ride their own horſes. In ſhort, the matches in one place are as rational as thoſe in the other; and it is more than probable that turnips, duſt, and dung, are all that can be found to furniſh out deſcription in either.

Forgive

Forgive me, my friend; but a person like me, bred up in a philosophic seclusion, is apt to regard, perhaps with too much asperity, those occurrences which sink man below his station in nature, and diminish the intrinsic value of humanity.

LETTER LXXXVII.

FROM FUM HOAM, TO LIEN CHI ALTANGI.

YOU tell me the people of Europe are wise; but where lies their wisdom? You say they are valiant too; yet I have some reasons to doubt of their valour. They are engaged in war among each other, yet apply to the Russians, their neighbours and ours, for assistance. Cultivating such an alliance argues at once imprudence and timidity. All subsidies paid for such an aid is strengthening the Russians, already too powerful, and weakening the employers, already exhausted by intestine commotions.

I cannot avoid beholding the Russian empire as the natural enemy of the more Western parts of Europe; as an enemy already possessed of great strength, and, from the nature of the government, every day threatening to become more powerful. This extensive empire, which, both in Europe and Asia, occupies almost a third of the old world, was, about two centuries ago, divided into separate kingdoms and dukedoms, and from such a division consequently feeble. Since the times, however, of Johan Basilides, it has encreased in strength and extent; and those untrodden forests, those innumerable savage animals which formerly covered the face of the country, are now removed, and colonies of mankind planted in their room. A kingdom thus enjoying peace internally, possessed of an unbounded extent of dominion, and learning the military art at the expence of others abroad, must every day grow more powerful; and it is probable we shall hear Russia, in future times, as formerly, called the Officina Gentium.

It was long the wish of Peter, their great monarch, to have a fort in some of the Western parts of Europe; many of his schemes and treaties were directed to this end; but, happily for Europe, he failed in them all. A fort in the power of this people would be like the possession of a flood-gate; and whenever ambition, interest, or necessity, prompted, they might then be able to deluge the whole Western world with a barbarous inundation.

Believe me, my friend, I cannot sufficiently contemn the politics of Europe, who thus make this powerful people arbitrators in their quarrel. The Russians are now at that period between refinement and barbarity, which seems most adapted to military atchievement; and if once they happen to get footing in the Western parts of Europe, it is not the feeble efforts of the sons of effeminacy and dissension that can serve to remove them. The fertile valley and soft climate will ever be sufficient inducements to draw whole myriads from their native desarts, the trackless wild, or snowy mountain.

History, experience, reason, nature, expand the book of wisdom before the eyes of mankind, but they will not read. We have seen with terror a winged phalanx of famished locusts, each singly contemptible, but from multitude become hideous, cover, like clouds, the face of day, and threaten the whole world with ruin. We have seen them settling on the fertile plains of India and Egypt, destroying in an instant the labours and the hopes of nations; sparing neither the fruit of the earth nor the verdure of the fields, and changing into a frightful desart landscapes of once luxuriant beauty. We have seen myriads of ants issuing together from the Southern desart, like a torrent whose source was inexhaustible, succeeding each other without end, and renewing their destroyed forces with unwearied perseverance, bringing desolation wherever they came, banishing men and animals, and when destitute of all subsistence, in heaps infecting the wilderness which they had made! Like these have been the migrations of men. When as yet savage, and almost resembling their brute partners in the forest, subject like

them only to the instincts of nature, and directed by hunger alone in the choice of an abode, how have we seen whole armies starting wild at once from their forests and their dens! Goths, Huns, Vandals, Saracens, Turks, Tartars, myriads of men, animals in human form, without country, without name, without laws, out-powering by numbers all opposition, ravaging cities, overturning empires; and, after having destroyed whole nations, and spread extensive desolation, how have we seen them sink oppressed by some new enemy, more barbarous, and even more unknown than they! Adieu.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

As the instruction of the fair-sex in this country is entirely committed to the care of foreigners; as their language-masters, music-masters, hair-frizzers, and governesses, are all from abroad; I had some intentions of opening a female academy myself, and made no doubt, as I was quite a foreigner, of meeting a favourable reception.

In this I intended to instruct the ladies in all the conjugal mysteries; wives should be taught the art of managing husbands, and maids the skill of properly chusing them; I would teach a wife how far she might venture to be sick without giving disgust; she should be acquainted with the great benefits of the cholic in the stomach, and all the thorough-bred insolence of fashion; maids should learn the secret of nicely distinguishing every competitor; they should be able to know the difference between a pedant and a scholar, a citizen and a prig, a squire and his horse, a beau and his monkey; but, chiefly, they should be taught the art of managing their smiles, from the contemptuous simper to the long laborious laugh.

But I have discontinued the project; for what would signify teaching ladies the manner of governing or chusing husbands, when marriage is at present so much out of fashion, that a lady is very well off who can get any husband at all? Celibacy now prevails in every rank of life; the streets are crouded with old bachelors, and the houses with ladies who have refused good offers, and are never likely to receive any for the future.

The only advice, therefore, I could give the fair-sex, as things stand at present, is to get husbands as fast as they can. There is certainly nothing in the whole creation, not even Babylon in ruins, more truly deplorable, than a lady in the virgin bloom of sixty-three; nor a battered unmarried beau, who squibs about from place to place, shewing his pig-tail wig and his ears. The one appears to my imagination in the form of a double night-cap, or a roll of pomatum; the other in the shape of an electuary, or a box of pills.

I would once more, therefore, advise the ladies to get husbands. I would desire them not to discard an old lover without very sufficient reasons, nor treat the new with ill-nature till they know him false; let not prudes alledge the falseness of the sex, coquets the pleasures of long courtships, or parents the necessary preliminaries of penny for penny. I have reasons that would silence even a casuist in this particular. In the first place, therefore, I divide the subject into fifteen heads, and then *sic argumentor*—but, not to give you and myself the spleen, be contented at present with an Indian tale.

In a winding of the river Amidar, just before it falls into the Caspian sea, there lies an island unfrequented by the inhabitants of the Continent. In this seclusion, blessed with all that wild uncultivated nature could bestow, lived a princess and her two daughters. She had been wrecked upon the coast while her children as yet were infants, who, of consequence, though grown up, were entirely unacquainted with man. Yet, unexperienced as the young ladies were in the opposite sex, both early discovered symptoms, the one of prudery, the other of being a coquet. The eldest was ever learning maxims of wisdom and discretion from her mamma, while the youngest employed all her hours in gazing

gazing at her own face in a neighbouring fountain.

Their usual amusement in this solitude was fishing: their mother had taught them all the secrets of the art; she shewed them which were the most likely places to throw out the line, what baits were most proper for the various seasons, and the best manner to draw up the finny prey, when they had hooked it. In this manner they spent their time, easy and innocent; till one day, the princess being indisposed, desired them to go and catch her a sturgeon or a shark for supper, which she fancied might sit easy on her stomach. The daughters obeyed; and clapping on a gold fish, the usual bait on those occasions, went and sat upon one of the rocks, letting the gilded hook glide down with the stream.

On the opposite shore, farther down, at the mouth of the river, lived a Diver for pearls; a youth who, by long habit in his trade, was almost grown amphibious; so that he could remain whole hours at the bottom of the water without ever fetching breath. He happened to be at that very instant diving when the ladies were fishing with the gilded hook. Seeing, therefore, the bait, which to him had the appearance of real gold, he was resolved to seize the prize; but both his hands being already filled with pearl oysters, he found himself obliged to snap at it with his mouth. The consequence is easily imagined; the hook, before unperceived, was instantly fastened in his jaw; nor could he, with all his efforts, or his floundering, get free.

'Sister,' cries the youngest princess, 'I have certainly caught a monstrous 'fish; I never perceived any thing 'struggle so at the end of my line be'fore; come, and help me to draw it in.' They both now therefore assisted in fishing up the Diver on shore; but nothing could equal their surprize upon seeing him. 'Bless my eyes!' cries the prude, 'what have we got here? This is a 'very odd fish to be sure! I never saw 'any thing in my life look so queer! 'What eyes! what terrible claws! what 'a monstrous snout! I have read of this 'monster somewhere before; it cer'tainly must be a *Tanlang*, that eats 'women; let us throw it back into the 'sea where we found it.'

The Diver in the mean time stood upon the beach, at the end of the line, with the hook in his mouth, using every art that he thought could best excite pity, and particularly looking extremely tender, which is usual in such circumstances. The coquet, therefore, in some measure influenced by the innocence of his looks, ventured to contradict her companion. 'Upon my word, 'sister,' says she, 'I see nothing in the 'animal so very terrible as you are 'pleased to apprehend; I think it may 'serve well enough for a change. Al'ways sharks, and sturgeons, and lob'sters, and crawfish, make me quite 'sick. I fancy a slice of this nicely 'grilladed, and dressed up with shrimp'sauce, would be very pretty eating. 'I fancy mamma would like a bit with 'pickles above all things in the world; 'and if it should not sit easy on her 'stomach, it will be time enough to 'discontinue it when found disagree'able, you know.'—'Horrid!' cries the prude, 'would the girl be poison'ed? I tell you it is a *Tanlang*; I 'have read of it in twenty places. It 'is every where described as the most 'pernicious animal that ever infested 'the ocean. I am certain it is the most 'insidious, ravenous creature in the 'world; and is certain destruction if 'taken internally.' The youngest sister was now therefore obliged to submit: both assisted in drawing the hook with some violence from the Diver's jaw; and he, finding himself at liberty, bent his breast against the broad wave, and disappeared in an instant.

Just at this juncture the mother came down to the beach, to know the cause of her daughters delay; they told her every circumstance, describing the monster they had caught. The old lady was one of the most discreet women in the world; she was called the Black-eyed Princess, from two black eyes she had received in her youth, being a little addicted to boxing in her liquor. 'Alas, 'my children!' cries she, 'what have 'you done? The fish you caught was 'a man-fish; one of the most tame do'mestic animals in the world. We 'could have let him run and play about 'the garden, and he would have been 'twenty times more entertaining than 'our squirrel or monkey.'—'If that 'be all,' says the young coquet, 'we 'will fish for him again. If that be 'all, I'll hold three tooth-picks to one 'pound

Corbould del. *Heath sculp.*

Plate III. Published as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. Octr. 7, 1786.

'pound of snuff, I catch him whenever 'I please.' Accordingly they threw in their line once more; but, with all their gilding, and padling, and assiduity, they could never after catch the Diver. In this state of solitude and disappointment they continued for many years, still fishing, but without success; till, at last, the genius of the place, in pity to their distresses, changed the prude into a shrimp, and the coquet into an oyster. Adieu.

LETTER LXXXIX.

FROM THE SAME.

I Am amused, my dear Fum, with the labours of some of the learned here. One shall write you a whole folio on the dissection of a caterpillar; another shall swell his works with a description of the plumage on the wing of a butterfly; a third shall see a little world on a peach leaf, and publish a book to describe what his readers might see more clearly in two minutes, only by being furnished with eyes and a microscope.

I have frequently compared the understandings of such men to their own glasses. Their field of vision is too contracted to take in the whole of any but minute objects; they view all nature bit by bit; now the proboscis, now the attennæ, now the pinnæ of—a flea. Now the polypus comes to breakfast upon a worm; now it is kept up to see how long it will live without eating; now it is turned inside outward; and now it sickens and dies. Thus they proceed, laborious in trifles, constant in experiment, without one single abstraction, by which alone knowledge may be properly said to encrease; till, at last, their ideas, ever employed upon minute things, contract to the size of the diminutive object, and a single mite shall fill the whole mind's capacity.

Yet, believe me, my friend, ridiculous as these men are to the world, they are set up as objects of esteem for each other. They have particular places appointed for their meetings; in which one shews his cockle-shell, and is praised by all the society; another produces his powder, makes some experiments that result in nothing, and comes off with admiration and applause; a third comes out with the important discovery of some new process in the skeleton of a mole, and is set down as the accurate and sensible; while one still more fortunate than the rest, by pickling, potting, and preserving monsters, rises into unbounded reputation.

The labours of such men, instead of being calculated to amuse the public, are laid out only in diverting each other. The world becomes very little the better or the wiser, for knowing what is the peculiar food of an insect that is itself the food of another, which in it's turn is eaten by a third: but there are men who have studied themselves into an habit of investigating and admiring such minutiæ. To these such subjects are pleasing, as there are some who contentedly spend whole days in endeavouring to solve ænigmas, or disentangle the puzzling sticks of children.

But of all the learned, those who pretend to investigate remote antiquity, have least to plead in their own defence, when they carry this passion to a faulty excess. They are generally found to supply by conjecture the want of record; and then by perseverance are wrought up into a confidence of the truth of opinions, which even to themselves at first appeared founded only in imagination.

The Europeans have heard much of the kingdom of China: it's politeness, arts, commerce, laws, and morals, are, however, but very imperfectly known among them. They have even now in their Indian warehouse numberless utensils, plants, minerals, and machines, of the use of which they are entirely ignorant; nor can any among them even make a probable guess for what they might have been designed. Yet, though this people be so ignorant of the present real state of China, the philosophers I am describing have entered into long, learned, laborious disputes, about what China was two thousand years ago. China and European happiness are but little connected even at this day; but European happiness and China two

thousand years ago have certainly no connection at all. However, the learned have written on and pursued the subject through all the labyrinths of antiquity; though the early dews and the tainted gale be passed away, though no footsteps remain to direct the doubtful chace, yet still they run forward, open upon the uncertain scent, and though in fact they follow nothing, are earnest in the pursuit. In this chace, however, they all take different ways. One, for example, confidently assures us, that China was peopled by a colony from Egypt. Sesostris, he observes, led his army as far as the Ganges; therefore, if he went so far, he might still have gone as far as China, which is but about a thousand miles from thence; therefore he did go to China; therefore China was not peopled before he went there; therefore it was peopled by him. Besides, the Egyptians have pyramids; the Chinese have in like manner their porcelane tower; the Egyptians used to light up candles upon every rejoicing, the Chinese have lanthorns upon the same occasion; the Egyptians had their great river, so have the Chinese; but what serves to put the matter past a doubt is, that the ancient kings of China and those of Egypt were called by the same names. The Emperor Ki is certainly the same with King Atoes; for, if we only change *K* into *A*, and *i* into *toes*, we shall have the name Atoes; and with equal ease *Menes* may be proved to be the same with the Emperor *Yu*; therefore the Chinese are a colony from Egypt.

But another of the learned is entirely different from the last; and he will have the Chinese to be a colony planted by Noah just after the deluge. First, from the vast similitude there is between the name of Fohi, the founder of the Chinese monarchy, and that of Noah, the preserver of the human race: Noah, Fohi, very like each other truly; they have each but four letters, and only two of the four happen to differ. But to strengthen the argument, Fohi, as the Chinese chronicle asserts, had no father. Noah, it is true, had a father, as the European Bible tells us; but then, as this father was probably drowned in the flood, it is just the same as if he had no father at all; therefore Noah and Fohi are the same. Just after the flood, the earth was covered with mud; if it was covered with mud, it must have been incrustated mud; if it was incrustated, it was cloathed with verdure; this was a fine, unembarrassed road for Noah to fly from his wicked children; he therefore did fly from them, and took a journey of two thousand miles for his own amusement; therefore Noah and Fohi are the same.

Another sect of literati, for they all pass among the vulgar for very great scholars, assert, that the Chinese came neither from the colony of Sesostris, nor from Noah, but are descended from Magog, Meshec, and Tubal; and therefore neither Sesostris, nor Noah, nor Fohi, are the same.

It is thus, my friend, that indolence assumes the airs of wisdom; and while it tosses the cup and ball with infantine folly, desires the world to look on, and calls the stupid pastime Philosophy and Learning. Adieu.

LETTER XC.

FROM THE SAME.

WHEN the men of this country are once turned of thirty, they regularly retire every year at proper intervals to lie in of the *spleen*. The vulgar, unfurnished with the luxurious comforts of the soft cushion, down bed, and easy-chair, are obliged, when the fit is on them, to nurse it up by drinking, idleness, and ill-humour. In such dispositions, unhappy is the foreigner who happens to cross them; his long chin, tarnished coat, or pinched hat, are sure to receive no quarter. If they meet no foreigner however to fight with, they are in such cases generally content with beating each other.

The rich, as they have more sensibility, are operated upon with greater violence by this disorder. Different from the poor, instead of becoming more insolent, they grow totally unfit for opposition. A general here, who would have

have faced a culverin when well, if the fit be on him, ſhall hardly find courage to ſnuff a candle. An admiral, who could have oppoſed a broadſide without ſhrinking, ſhall ſit whole days in his chamber, mobbed up in double night-caps, ſhuddering at the intruſive breeze, and diſtinguiſhable from his wife only by his black beard and heavy eye-brows.

In the country, this diſorder moſtly attacks the fair-ſex; in town it is moſt unfavourable to the men. A lady, who has pined whole years amidſt cooing doves and complaining nightingales in rural retirement, ſhall reſume all her vivacity in one night at a city gaming-table; her huſband who roared, hunted, and got drunk at home, ſhall grow ſplenetic in town, in proportion to his wife's good-humour. Upon their arrival in London, they exchange their diſorders. In conſequence of her parties and excurſions, he puts on the furred cap and ſcarlet ſtomacher, and perfectly reſembles an Indian huſband; who, when his wife is ſafely delivered, permits her to tranſact buſineſs abroad, while he undergoes all the formality of keeping his bed, and receiving all the condolence in her place.

But thoſe who reſide conſtantly in town, owe this diſorder moſtly to the influence of the weather. It is impoſſible to deſcribe what a variety of tranſmutations an Eaſt wind ſhall produce; it has been known to change a lady of faſhion into a parlour couch; an alderman into a plate of cuſtards; and a diſpenſer of juſtice into a rat-trap. Even philoſophers themſelves, are not exempt from it's influence; it has often converted a poet into a coral and bells, and a patriot ſenator into a dumb-waiter.

Some days ago, I went to viſit the man in black, and entered his houſe with that chearfulneſs which the certainty of a favourable reception always inſpires. Upon opening the door of his apartment, I found him with the moſt rueful face imaginable, in a morning-gown and flannel night-cap, earneſtly employed in learning to blow the German-flute. Struck with the abſurdity of a man in the decline of life thus blowing away all his conſtitution and ſpirits, even without the conſolation of being muſical, I ventured to aſk what could induce him to attempt learning ſo difficult an inſtrument ſo late in life. To this he made no reply; but groaning, and ſtill holding the flute to his lip, continued to gaze at me for ſome moments very angrily, and then proceeded to practiſe his gammut as before. After having produced a variety of the moſt hideous tones in nature; at laſt, turning to me, he demanded, whether I did not think he had made a ſurprizing progreſs in two days? 'You 'ſee,' continues he, 'I have got the 'Ambuſheer already; and as for fin'gering, my maſter tells me, I ſhall 'have that in a few leſſons more.' I was ſo much aſtoniſhed with this inſtance of inverted ambition, that I knew not what to reply, but ſoon diſcerned the cauſe of all his abſurdities; my friend was under a metamorphoſis by the power of ſpleen, and flute-blowing was unluckily become his adventitious paſſion.

In order, therefore, to baniſh his anxiety imperceptibly, by ſeeming to indulge it, I began to deſcant on thoſe gloomy topics by which philoſophers often get rid of their own ſpleen, by communicating it; the wretchedneſs of a man in this life, the happineſs of ſome wrought out of the miſeries of others, the neceſſity that wretches ſhould expire under puniſhment, that rogues might enjoy affluence in tranquillity; I led him on from the inhumanity of the rich to the ingratitude of the beggar; from the inſincerity of refinement to the fierceneſs of ruſticity; and, at laſt, had the good fortune to reſtore him to his uſual ſerenity of temper, by permitting him to expatiate upon all the modes of human miſery.

'Some nights ago,' ſays my friend, 'ſitting alone by my fire, I happened 'to look into an account of the detec'tion of a ſet of men called the Thief'takers. I read over the many hide'ous cruelties of thoſe haters of man'kind, of their pretended friendſhip to 'wretches they meant to betray, of their 'ſending men out to rob, and then 'hanging them. I could not avoid 'ſometimes interrupting the narrative, 'by crying out—"Yet theſe are men!" 'As I went on, I was informed that 'they had lived by this practice ſeveral 'years, and had been enriched by the 'price of blood—"And yet," cried I, "I have been ſent into this world, and "am deſired to call theſe men my bro"thers!" I read, that the very man 'who

'who led the condemned wretch to the 'gallows, was he who falsely swore his 'life away—"And yet," continued I, "that perjurer had just such a nose, such "lips, such hands, and such eyes, as "Newton." I at last came to the ac-'count of the wretch that was searched 'after robbing one of the thief-takers 'of half a crown. Those of the con-'federacy knew that he had got but 'that single half-crown in the world; 'after a long search, therefore, which 'they knew would be fruitless, and 'taking from him the half-crown, which 'they knew was all he had, one of the 'gang compassionately cried out— "Alas! poor creature, let him keep all "the rest he has got, it will do him ser-"vice in Newgate, where we are send-"ing him." This was an instance of 'such complicated guilt and hypocrisy, 'that I threw down the book in an ago-'ny of rage, and began to think with 'malice of all the human kind. I sat 'silent for some minutes; and soon per-'ceiving the ticking of my watch be-'ginning to grow noisy and troublesome, 'I quickly placed it out of hearing, 'and strove to resume my serenity. 'But the watchman soon gave me a se-'cond alarm. I had scarcely recover-'ed from this, when my peace was as-'saulted by the wind at my window; 'and, when that ceased to blow, I list-'ened for death-watches in the wain-'scot. I now found my whole system 'discomposed, I strove to find a resource 'in philosophy and reason; but what 'could I oppose, or where direct my 'blow, when I could see no enemy to 'combat? I saw no misery approach-'ing, nor knew any I had to fear; yet 'still I was miserable. Morning came, 'I sought for tranquillity in dissipa-'tion, sauntered from one place of pub-'lic resort to another; but found my-'self disagreeable to my acquaintance, 'and ridiculous to others. I tried at 'different times dancing, fencing, and 'riding; I solved geometrical problems, 'shaped tobacco-stoppers, wrote verses, 'and cut paper. At last I placed my 'affections on music; and find, that 'earnest employment, if it cannot cure, 'at least will palliate every anxiety.'

Adieu.

LETTER XCI.

FROM THE SAME.

IT is no unpleasing contemplation to consider the influence which soil and climate have upon the disposition of the inhabitants, the animals, and vegetables, of different countries. That among the brute creation is much more visible than in man, and that in vegetables more than either. In some places, those plants which are entirely poisonous at home, lose their deleterious quality by being carried abroad. There are serpents in Macedonia so harmless as to be used as play-things for children; and we are told that, in some parts of Fez, there are lions so very timorous as to be scared away, though coming in herds, by the cries of women.

I know of no country, where the influence of climate and soil is more visible than in England; the same hidden cause which gives courage to their dogs and cocks, gives also fierceness to their men. But chiefly this ferocity appears among the vulgar. The polite of every country pretty nearly resemble each other. But as in simpling, it is among the uncultivated productions of nature, we are to examine the characteristic differences of climate and soil; so in an estimate of the genius of the people, we must look among the sons of unpolished rusticity. The vulgar English, therefore, may be easily distinguished from all the rest of the world by superior pride, impatience, and a peculiar hardiness of soul.

Perhaps no qualities in the world are more susceptible of a fine polish than these; artificial complaisance and easy deference being superinduced over these, generally forms a great character; something at once elegant and majestic; affable, yet sincere. Such, in general, are the better sort; but they who are left in primitive rudeness, are the least disposed for society with others, or comfort internally, of any people under the sun.

The poor, indeed, of every country, are but little prone to treat each other with tenderness; their own miseries are too apt to engross all their pity; and perhaps, too, they give but little commiseration,

miſeration, as they find but little from others. But, in England, the poor treat each other upon every occaſion with more than ſavage animoſity, and as if they were in a ſtate of open war by nature. In China, if two porters ſhould meet in a narrow ſtreet, they would lay down their burthens, make a thouſand excuſes to each other for the accidental interruption, and beg pardon on their knees; if two men of the ſame occupation ſhould meet here, they would firſt begin to ſcold, and at laſt to beat each other. One would think they had miſeries enough reſulting from penury and labour, not to encreaſe them by ill-nature among themſelves, and ſubjection to new penalties; but ſuch conſiderations never weigh with them.

But, to recompenſe this ſtrange abſurdity, they are in the main generous, brave, and enterpriſing. They feel the ſlighteſt injuries with a degree of ungoverned impatience, but reſiſt the greateſt calamities with ſurpriſing fortitude. Thoſe miſeries under which any other people in the world would ſink, they have often ſhewed they were capable of enduring: if accidentally caſt upon ſome deſolate coaſt, their perſeverance is beyond what any other nation is capable of ſuſtaining; if impriſoned for crimes, their efforts to eſcape are greater than among others. The peculiar ſtrength of their priſons, when compared to thoſe elſewhere, argues their hardineſs; even the ſtrongeſt priſons I have ever ſeen in other countries, would be very inſufficient to confine the untameable ſpirit of an Engliſhman. In ſhort, what man dares do in circumſtances of danger, an Engiſhman will. His virtues ſeem to ſleep in the calm, and are called out only to combat the kindred ſtorm.

But the greateſt eulogy of this people, is the generoſity of their miſcreants; the tenderneſs in general of their robbers and highwaymen. Perhaps no people can produce inſtances of the ſame kind, where the deſperate mix pity with injuſtice; ſtill ſhew that they underſtand a diſtinction in crimes, and even in acts of violence have ſtill ſome tincture of remaining virtue. In every other country, robbery and murder go almoſt always together; here it ſeldom happens, except upon ill-judged reſiſtance or purſuit. The banditti of other countries are unmerciful to a ſupreme degree; the highwayman and robber here are generous, at leaſt, in their intercourſe among each other. Taking therefore my opinion of the Engliſh from the virtues and vices practiſed among the vulgar, they at once preſent to a ſtranger all their faults, and keep their virtues up only for the enquiring eye of a philoſopher.

Foreigners are generally ſhocked at their inſolence upon firſt coming among them; they find themſelves ridiculed and inſulted in every ſtreet; they meet with none of thoſe trifling civilities ſo frequent elſewhere, which are inſtances of mutual good-will without previous acquaintance; they travel through the country either too ignorant or too obſtinate to cultivate a cloſer acquaintance; meet every moment ſomething to excite their diſguſt, and return home to characteriſe this as the region of ſpleen, inſolence, and ill-nature. In ſhort, England would be the laſt place in the world I would travel to by way of amuſement; but the firſt for inſtruction. I would chuſe to have others for my acquaintance, but Engliſhmen for my friends.

LETTER XCII.

TO THE SAME.

THE mind is ever ingenious in making it's own diſtreſs. The wandering beggar, who has none to protect, to feed, or to ſhelter him, fancies compleat happineſs in labour and a full meal; take him from rags and want, feed, cloath, and employ him, his wiſhes now riſe one ſtep above his ſtation; he could be happy were he poſſeſſed of raiment, food, and eaſe. Suppoſe his wiſhes gratified even in theſe, his proſpects widen as he aſcends; he finds himſelf in affluence and tranquillity indeed, but indolence ſoon breeds anxiety; and he deſires not only to be freed from pain, but to be poſſeſſed of pleaſure: pleaſure is granted him, and this but opens his ſoul to ambition; and ambition will be ſure to taint his future happineſs either with jealouſy, diſappointment, or fatigue.

But of all the arts of diſtreſs found out by man for his own torment, perhaps

haps that of philoſophic miſery is moſt truly ridiculous; a paſſion no where carried to ſo extravagant an exceſs, as in the country where I now reſide. It is not enough to engage all the compaſſion of a philoſopher here, that his own globe is harraſſed with wars, peſtilence, or barbarity; he ſhall grieve for the inhabitants of the moon, if the ſituation of her imaginary mountains happen to alter; and dread the extinction of the ſun, if the ſpots on it's ſurface happen to encreaſe. One ſhould imagine that philoſophy was introduced to make men happy; but here it ſerves to make hundreds miſerable.

My landlady, ſome days ago, brought me the diary of a philoſopher of this deſponding ſort, who had lodged in the apartment before me. It contains the hiſtory of a life which ſeems to be one continued tiſſue of ſorrow, apprehenſion, and diſtreſs. A ſingle week will ſerve as a ſpecimen of the whole.

MONDAY.

IN what a tranſient decaying ſituation are we placed; and what various reaſons does philoſophy furniſh to make mankind unhappy! A ſingle grain of muſtard ſhall continue to produce it's ſimilitude through numberleſs ſucceſſions; yet what has been granted to this little ſeed, has been denied to our planetary ſyſtem; the muſtard-ſeed is ſtill unaltered, but the ſyſtem is growing old, and muſt quickly fall to decay. How terrible will it be, when the motions of all the planets have at laſt become ſo irregular as to need repairing; when the moon ſhall fall into frightful paroxyſms of alteration; when the earth, deviating from it's ancient track, and with every other planet forgetting it's circular revolutions, ſhall become ſo eccentric, that, unconfined by the laws of ſyſtem, it ſhall fly off into boundleſs ſpace, to knock againſt ſome diſtant world, or fall in upon the ſun, either extinguiſhing his light, or burned up by his flames in a moment! Perhaps, while I write, this dreadful change is begun. Shield me from univerſal ruin! Yet, idiot man laughs, ſings, and rejoices, in the very face of the ſun, and ſeems no way touched with his ſituation.

TUESDAY.

Went to bed in great diſtreſs, awaked and was comforted, by conſidering that this change was to happen at ſome indefinite time; and therefore, like death, the thoughts of it might eaſily be borne. But there is a revolution, a fixed determined revolution, which muſt certainly come to paſs; yet which, by good fortune, I ſhall never feel, except in my poſterity. The obliquity of the equator with the ecliptic is now twenty minutes leſs than when it was obſerved two thouſand years ago by Piteas. If this be the caſe, in ſix thouſand the obliquity will be ſtill leſs by a whole degree. This being ſuppoſed, it is evident that our earth, as Louville has clearly proved, has a motion, by which the climates muſt neceſſarily change place; and, in the ſpace of one million of years, England ſhall actually travel to the Antarctic pole. I ſhudder at the change! How ſhall our unhappy grandchildren endure the hideous climate! A million of years will ſoon be accompliſhed; they are but a moment, when compared to eternity; then ſhall our charming country, as I may ſay, in a moment of time, reſemble the hideous wilderneſs of Nova Zembla.

WEDNESDAY.

To-night, by my calculation, the long-predicted comet is to make it's firſt appearance. Heavens! what terrors are impending over our little dim ſpeck of earth! Dreadful viſitation! Are we to be ſcorched in it's fires, or only ſmothered in the vapour of it's tail? That is the queſtion! Thoughtleſs mortals, go build houſes, plant orchards, purchaſe eſtates, for to-morrow you die. But what if the comet ſhould not come? That would be equally fatal! Comets are ſervants, which periodically return to ſupply the ſun with fuel. If our ſun, therefore, ſhould be diſappointed of the expected ſupply, and all his fuel be in the mean time burnt out, he muſt expire like an exhauſted taper. What a miſerable ſituation muſt our earth be in without his enlivening ray! Have we not ſeen ſeveral neighbouring ſuns entirely diſappear? Has not a fixed ſtar, near the tail of the Ram, lately been quite extinguiſhed?

THURSDAY.

The comet has not yet appeared; I am ſorry for it: firſt, ſorry becauſe my calculation is falſe; ſecondly, ſorry leſt the ſun ſhould want fuel; thirdly, ſorry leſt the wits ſhould laugh at our errone-

ous predictions; and, fourthly, sorry, because if it appears to-night, it must necessarily come within the sphere of the earth's attraction; and Heaven help the unhappy country on which it happens to fall!

FRIDAY.

Our whole society have been out all eager in search of the comet, We have seen not less than sixteen comets in different parts of the heavens. However, we are unanimously resolved to fix upon one only to be the comet expected. That near Virgo wants nothing but a tail to fit it out compleatly for terrestrial admiration.

SATURDAY.

The moon is, I find, at her old pranks. Her appulses, librations, and other irregularities, indeed amaze me. My daughter, too, is this morning gone off with a grenadier. No way surprising. I was never able to give her a relish for wisdom. She ever promised to be a mere expletive in the creation. But the moon, the moon gives me real uneasiness; I fondly fancied I had fixed her. I had thought her constant, and constant only to me; but every night discovers her infidelity, and proves me a desolate and abandoned lover. Adieu.

LETTER XCIII.

TO THE SAME.

IT is surprising what an influence titles shall have upon the mind, even though these titles be of our own making. Like children, we dress up the puppets in finery, and then stand in astonishment at the plastic wonder. I have been told of a rat-catcher here, who strolled for a long time about the villages near town, without finding any employment; at last, however, he thought proper to take the title of his Majesty's Rat-catcher in Ordinary, and this succeeded beyond his expectations; when it was known that he caught rats at court, all were ready to give him countenance and employment.

But of all the people, they who make books seem most perfectly sensible of the advantage of titular dignity. All seem convinced, that a book written by vulgar hands can neither instruct nor improve; none but Kings, Chams, and Mandarines, can write with any probability of success. If the titles inform me right, not only Kings and Courtiers, but Emperors themselves, in this country, periodically supply the press.

A man here who should write, and honestly confess that he wrote for bread, might as well send his manuscript to fire the baker's oven; not one creature will read him; all must be court-bred poets, or pretend at least to be court-bred, who can expect to please. Should the caitiff fairly avow a design of emptying our pockets and filling his own, every reader would instantly forsake him; even those who write for bread themselves would combine to worry him; perfectly sensible that his attempts only served to take the bread out of their mouths.

And yet this silly prepossession the more amazes me, when I consider, that almost all the excellent productions in wit that have appeared here, were purely the offspring of necessity; their Drydens, Butlers, Otways, and Farquhars, were all writers for bread. Believe me, my friend, hunger has a most amazing faculty of sharpening the genius; and he who with a full belly can think like a hero, after a course of fasting, shall rise to the sublimity of a demi-god.

But what will most amaze, is, that this very set of men, who are now so much depreciated by fools, are, however, the very best writers they have among them at present. For my own part, were I to buy an hat, I would not have it from a stocking-maker, but an hatter; were I to buy shoes, I should not go to the taylor's for that purpose. It is just so with regard to wit: did I, for my life, desire to be well served, I would apply only to those who made it their trade, and lived by it. You smile at the oddity of my opinion; but be assured, my friend, that wit is in some measure mechanical: and that a man, long habituated to catch at even it's resemblance, will at last be happy enough to possess the substance. By a long habit of writing, he acquires a justness of

of thinking, and a mastery of manner, which holiday-writers, even with ten times his genius, may vainly attempt to equal. How then are they deceived, who expect from title, dignity, and exterior circumstance, an excellence which is in some measure acquired by habit, and sharpened by necessity! You have seen, like me, many literary reputations promoted by the influence of fashion, which have scarce survived the possessor; you have seen the poor hardly earn the little reputation they acquired, and their merit only acknowledged when they were incapable of enjoying the pleasures of popularity: such, however, is the reputation worth possessing; that which is hardly earned is hardly lost. Adieu.

LETTER XCIV.

FROM HINGPO, IN MOSCOW, TO LIEN CHI ALTANGI, IN LONDON.

WHERE will my disappointments end? Must I still be doomed to accuse the severity of my fortune, and shew my constancy in distress rather than moderation in prosperity? I had at least hopes of conveying my charming companion safe from the reach of every enemy, and of again restoring her to her native soil. But those hopes are now no more.

Upon leaving Terki, we took the nearest road to the dominions of Russia. We passed the Ural mountains covered with eternal snow; and traversed the forests of Ufa, where the prowling bear and shrieking hyena keep an undisputed possession. We next embarked upon the rapid river Bulija, and made the best of our way to the banks of the Wolga, where it waters the fruitful vallies of Casan.

There were two vessels in company, properly equipped and armed, in order to oppose the Wolga pirates, who we were informed infested this river. Of all mankind these pirates are the most terrible. They are composed of the criminals and outlawed peasants of Russia, who fly to the forests that lie along the banks of the Wolga for protection. Here they join in parties, lead a savage life, and have no other subsistence but plunder. Being deprived of houses, friends, or a fixed habitation, they become more terrible even than the tiger, and as insensible to all the feelings of humanity. They neither give quarter to those they conquer, nor receive it when overpowered themselves. The severity of the laws against them serve to encrease their barbarity, and seem to make them a neutral species of beings between the wildness of the lion and the subtlety of the man. When taken alive, their punishment is hideous. A floating gibbet is erected, which is let run down with the stream; here, upon an iron hook stuck under their ribs, and upon which the whole weight of their body depends, they are left to expire in the most terrible agonies; some being thus found to linger several days successively.

We were but three days voyage from the confluence of this river into the Wolga, when we perceived at a distance behind us an armed barque coming up, with the assistance of sails and oars, in order to attack us. The dreadful signal of death was hung upon the mast, and our captain with his glass could easily discern them to be pirates. It is impossible to express our consternation on this occasion; the whole crew instantly came together to consult the properest means of safety. It was therefore soon determined to send off our women and valuable commodities in one of our vessels, and that the men should stay in the other, and boldly oppose the enemy. This resolution was soon put into execution, and I now reluctantly parted from the beautiful Zelis for the first time since our retreat from Persia. The vessel in which she was disappeared to my longing eyes, in proportion as that of the pirates approached us. They soon came up; but, upon examining our strength, and perhaps sensible of the manner in which we had sent off our most valuable effects, they seemed more eager to pursue the vessel we had sent away than attack us. In this manner they continued to harrass us for three days; still endeavouring to pass us without fighting. But, on the fourth day, finding it entirely impossible, and despairing

ſpairing to ſeize the expected booty, they deſiſted from their endeavours, and left us to purſue our voyage without interruption.

Our joy on this occaſion was great; but ſoon a diſappointment more terrible, becauſe unexpected, ſucceeded. The barque, in which our women and treaſure were ſent off, was wrecked upon the banks of the Wolga, for want of a proper number of hands to manage her, and the whole crew carried by the peaſants up the country. Of this, however, we were not ſenſible till our arrival at Moſcow; where, expecting to meet our ſeparated barque, we were informed of it's misfortune, and our loſs. Need I paint the ſituation of my mind on this occaſion! Need I deſcribe all I feel, when I deſpair of beholding the beautiful Zelis more! Fancy had dreſſed the future proſpect of my life in the gayeſt colouring; but one unexpected ſtroke of fortune has robbed it of every charm. Her dear idea mixes with every ſcene of pleaſure; and without her preſence to enliven it, the whole becomes tedious, inſipid, inſupportable. I will confeſs, now that ſhe is loſt, I will confeſs, I loved her; nor is it in the power of time, or of reaſon, to eraſe her image from my heart. Adieu.

LETTER XCV.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO HINGPO, AT MOSCOW *.

YOUR misfortunes are mine. But as every period of life is marked with it's own, you muſt learn to endure them. Diſappointed love makes the miſery of youth; diſappointed ambition, that of manhood; and ſucceſsleſs avarice, that of age. Theſe three attack us through life; and it is our duty to ſtand upon our guard. To love, we ought to oppoſe diſſipation, and endeavour to change the object of the affections; to ambition, the happineſs of indolence and obſcurity; and to avarice, the fear of ſoon dying. Theſe are the ſhields with which we ſhould arm ourſelves; and thus make every ſcene of life, if not pleaſing, at leaſt ſupportable.

Men complain of not finding a place of repoſe. They are in the wrong; they have it for ſeeking. What they ſhould indeed complain of is, that the heart is an enemy to that very repoſe they ſeek. To themſelves alone ſhould they impute their diſcontent. They ſeek within the ſhort ſpan of life to ſatisfy a thouſand deſires; each of which alone is inſatiable. One month paſſes and another comes on; the year ends, and then begins; but man is ſtill unchanging in folly, ſtill blindly continuing in prejudice. To the wiſe man, every climate and every ſoil is pleaſing; to him a parterre of flowers is the famous valley of gold; to him, a little brook, 'the fountain of the young peach-trees †;' to ſuch a man, the melody of birds is more raviſhing than the harmony of a full concert; and the tincture of the cloud preferable to the touch of the fineſt pencil.

The life of man is a journey: a journey that muſt be travelled, however bad the roads or the accommodation. If, in the beginning, it is found dangerous, narrow, and difficult, it muſt either grow better in the end, or we ſhall by cuſtom learn to bear it's inequality.

But though I ſee you incapable of penetrating into grand principles, attend, at leaſt, to a ſimile adapted to every apprehenſion. I am mounted upon a wretched aſs. I ſee another man before me upon a ſprightly horſe, at which I find ſome uneaſineſs. I look behind me and ſee numbers on foot ſtooping under heavy burdens; let me learn to pity their eſtate, and thank Heaven for my own.

Shingfu, when under misfortunes, would, in the beginning, weep like a child; but he ſoon recovered his former tranquillity. After indulging grief for a few days, he would become, as uſual, the moſt merry old man in all the province of Shanſi. About the time that

* This letter is a rhapſody from the Maxims of the philoſopher Me. Vide Lett. curieuſe et edifiant. Vide etiam du Halde, Vol. ii. p. 98.

† This paſſage the editor does not underſtand.

his wife died, his poſſeſſions were all conſumed by fire, and his only ſon ſold into captivity; Shingfu grieved for one day, and the next went to dance at a mandarine's door for his dinner. The company were ſurpriſed to ſee the old man ſo merry when ſuffering ſuch great loſſes; and the mandarine himſelf coming out, aſked him, how he, who had grieved ſo much, and given way to the calamity the day before, could now be ſo chearful? 'You aſk me one queſtion,' cries the old man, 'let me anſwer by 'aſking another: Which is the moſt 'durable, a hard thing, or a ſoft thing; 'that which reſiſts, or that which makes 'no reſiſtance?'—'An hard thing, to 'be ſure,' replied the mandarine. 'There you are wrong,' returned Shingfu: 'I am now fourſcore years 'old; and if you look in my mouth, 'you will find that I have loſt all my 'teeth, but not a bit of my tongue.' Adieu.

LETTER XCVI.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

THE manner of grieving for our departed friends in China is very different from that of Europe. The mourning colour of Europe is black; that of China white. When a parent or relation dies here, for they ſeldom mourn for friends, it is only clapping on a ſuit of ſables, grimacing it for a few days, and all, ſoon forgotten, goes on as before; not a ſingle creature miſſing the deceaſed, except perhaps a favourite houſe-keeper, or a favourite cat.

On the contrary, with us in China it is a very ſerious affair. The piety with which I have ſeen you behave on one of theſe occaſions ſhould never be forgotten. I remember it was upon the death of thy grandmother's maiden ſiſter. The coffin was expoſed in the principal hall in public view. Before it were placed the figures of eunuchs, horſes, tortoiſes, and other animals, in attitudes of grief and reſpect. The more diſtant relations of the old lady, and I among the number, came to pay our compliments of condolance, and to ſalute the deceaſed after the manner of our country. We had ſcarce preſented our wax-candles and perfumes, and given the howl of departure, when, crawling on his belly from under a curtain, out came the reverend Fum Hoam himſelf, in all the diſmal ſolemnity of diſtreſs. Your looks were ſet for ſorrow; your cloathing conſiſted in an hempen bag, tied round the neck with a ſtring. For two long months did this mourning continue. By night you lay ſtretched on a ſingle mat, and ſate on the ſtool of diſcontent by day. Pious man, who could thus ſet an example of ſorrow and decorum to our country. Pious country, where, if we do not grieve at the departure of our friends for their ſakes, at leaſt we are taught to regret them for our own.

All is very different here; amazement all. What ſort of a people am I got amongſt! Fum, thou ſon of Fo, what ſort of a people am I got amongſt! No crawling round the coffin; no dreſſing up in hempen bags; no lying on mats, or ſitting on ſtools. Gentlemen here ſhall put on firſt mourning with as ſprightly an air as if preparing for a birth-night; and widows ſhall actually dreſs for another huſband in their weeds for the former. The beſt jeſt of all is, that our merry mourners clap bits of muſlin on their ſleeves, and theſe are called *weepers*. Weeping muſlin! alas, alas, very ſorrowful truly! Theſe weepers then, it ſeems, are to bear the whole burthen of the diſtreſs.

But I have had the ſtrongeſt inſtance of this contraſt; this tragi-comical behaviour in diſtreſs upon a recent occaſion. Their king, whoſe departure, though ſudden, was not unexpected, died after a reign of many years. His age, and uncertain ſtate of health, ſerved in ſome meaſure to diminiſh the ſorrow of his ſubjects; and their expectations from his ſucceſſor ſeemed to balance their minds between uneaſineſs and ſatisfaction. But how ought they to have behaved on ſuch an occaſion? Surely, they ought rather to have endeavoured to teſtify their *gratitude* to their deceaſed friend, than to proclaim their *hopes* of the future. Sure even the ſucceſſor

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ceſſor muſt ſuppoſe their love to wear the face of adulation, which ſo quickly changed the object. However, the very ſame day on which the old king died, they made rejoicing for the new.

For my part, I have no conception of this new manner of mourning and rejoicing in a breath; of being merry and ſad; of mixing a funeral proceſſion with a jig and a bonfire. At leaſt, it would have been juſt, that they who flattered the king while living for virtues which he had not, ſhould lament him dead for thoſe he really had.

In this univerſal cauſe for national diſtreſs, as I had no intereſt myſelf, ſo it is but natural to ſuppoſe I felt no real affliction. 'In all the loſſes of our 'friends,' ſays an European philoſopher, 'we firſt conſider how much our 'own welfare is affected by their de'parture, and moderate our real grief 'juſt in the ſame proportion.' Now, as I had neither received nor expected to receive favours from kings or their flatterers; as I had no acquaintance in particular with their late monarch; as I knew that the place of a king is ſoon ſupplied; and, as the Chineſe proverb has it, That though the world may ſometimes want coblers to mend their ſhoes, there is no danger of it's wanting emperors to rule their kingdoms: from ſuch conſiderations, I could bear the loſs of a king with the moſt philoſophic reſignation. However, I thought it my duty at leaſt to appear ſorrowful; to put on a melancholy aſpect, or to ſet my face by that of the people.

The firſt company I came amongſt after the news became general, was a ſet of jolly companions, who were drinking proſperity to the enſuing reign. I entered the room with looks of deſpair, and even expected applauſe for the ſuperlative miſery of my countenance. Inſtead of that, I was univerſally condemned by the company for a grimacing ſon of a whore, and deſired to take away my penitential phiz to ſome other quarter. I now corrected my former miſtake; and, with the moſt ſprightly air imaginable, entered a company, where they were talking over the ceremonies of the approaching funeral. Here I ſat for ſome time with an air of pert vivacity; when one of the chief mourners immediately obſerving my good humour, deſired me, if I pleaſed, to go and grin ſomewhere elſe; they wanted no diſaffected ſcoundrels there. Leaving this company, therefore, I was reſolved to aſſume a look perfectly neutral; and have ever ſince been ſtudying the faſhionable air: ſomething between jeſt and earneſt; a compleat virginity of face, uncontaminated with the ſmalleſt ſymptom of meaning.

But though grief be a very ſlight affair here, the mourning, my friend, is a very important concern. When an emperor dies in China, the whole expence of the ſolemnities is defrayed from the royal coffers. When the great die here, mandarines are ready enough to order mourning; but I do not ſee that they are ſo ready to pay for it. If they ſend me down from court the grey undreſs frock, or the black coat without pocket holes, I am willing enough to comply with their commands, and wear both; but, by the head of Confucius! to be obliged to wear black, and buy it into the bargain, is more than my tranquillity of temper can bear. What, order me to wear mourning before they know whether I can buy it or no! Fum, thou ſon of Fo, what ſort of a people am I got amongſt; where being out of black is a certain ſymptom of poverty; where thoſe who have miſerable faces cannot have mourning, and thoſe who have mourning will not wear a miſerable face!

LETTER XCVII.

FROM THE SAME.

IT is uſual for the bookſellers here, when a book has given univerſal pleaſure upon one ſubject, to bring out ſeveral more upon the ſame plan; which are ſure to have purchaſers and readers from that deſire which all men have to view a pleaſing object on every ſide. The firſt performance ſerves rather to awaken than ſatisfy attention; and when that is once moved, the ſlighteſt effort ſerves to continue it's progreſſion; the merit of the firſt diffuſes a light ſuffi-

cient to illuminate the ſucceeding efforts; and no other ſubject can be reliſhed till that is exhauſted. A ſtupid work coming thus immediately in the train of an applauded performance, weans the mind from the object of it's pleaſure; and reſembles the ſponge thruſt into the mouth of a diſcharged culverin, in order to adapt it for a new exploſion.

This manner, however, of drawing off a ſubject, or a peculiar mode of writing, to the dregs, effectually precludes a revival of that ſubject or manner for ſome time for the future; the ſated reader turns from it with a kind of literary nauſea; and though the titles of books are the part of them moſt read, yet he has ſcarce perſeverance enough to wade through the title-page.

Of this number I own myſelf one; I am now grown callous to ſeveral ſubjects, and different kinds of compoſition. Whether ſuch originally pleaſed, I will not take upon me to determine; but at preſent I ſpurn a new book merely upon ſeeing it's name in an advertiſement; nor have the ſmalleſt curioſity to look beyond the firſt leaf, even though in the ſecond the author promiſes his own face neatly engraved on copper.

I am become a perfect epicure in reading; plain beef or ſolid mutton will never do. I am for a Chineſe diſh of bears claws and birds neſts. I am for ſauce ſtrong with aſſafœtida, or fuming with garlick. For this reaſon there are an hundred very wiſe, learned, virtuous, well-intended productions, that have no charms for me. Thus, for the ſoul of me, I could never find courage nor grace enough to wade above two pages deep into 'Thoughts upon God 'and Nature;' or, 'Thoughts upon 'Providence;' or, 'Thoughts upon 'Free Grace;' or indeed into Thoughts upon any thing at all. I can no longer meditate with Meditations for every day in the year; Eſſays upon divers ſubjects cannot allure me, though never ſo intereſting; and as for Funeral Sermons, or even Thankſgiving Sermons, I can neither weep with the one, nor rejoice with the other.

But it is chiefly in gentle poetry, where I ſeldom look farther than the title. The truth is, I take up books to be told ſomething new; but here, as it is now managed, the reader is told nothing. He opens the book, and there finds very good words, truly, and much exactneſs of rhyme, but no information. A parcel of gaudy images paſs on before his imagination like the figures in a dream; but curioſity, induction, reaſon, and the whole train of affections, are faſt aſleep. The *jocunda et idonea vitæ*; thoſe ſallies which mend the heart while they amuſe the fancy, are quite forgotten; ſo that a reader who would take up ſome modern applauded performances of this kind, muſt, in order to be pleaſed, firſt leave his good ſenſe behind him, take for his recompence and guide bloated and compound epithet, and dwell on paintings, juſt indeed, becauſe laboured with minute exactneſs.

If we examine, however, our internal ſenſations, we ſhall find ourſelves but little pleaſed with ſuch laboured vanities; we ſhall find that our applauſe rather proceeds from a kind of contagion caught up from others, and which we contribute to diffuſe, than from what we privately feel. There are ſome ſubjects of which almoſt all the world perceive the futility; yet all combine in impoſing upon each other, as worthy of praiſe. But chiefly this impoſition obtains in literature, where men publicly contemn what they reliſh with rapture in private, and approve abroad what has given them diſguſt at home. The truth is, we deliver thoſe criticiſms in public which are ſuppoſed to be beſt calculated not to do juſtice to the author, but to impreſs others with an opinion of our ſuperior diſcernment.

But let works of this kind, which have already come off with ſuch applauſe, enjoy it all. It is neither my wiſh to diminiſh, as I was never conſiderable enough to add to their fame. But, for the future, I fear there are many poems of which I ſhall find ſpirits to read but the title. In the firſt place, all odes upon winter, or ſummer, or autumn; in ſhort, all odes, epodes, and monodies whatſoever, ſhall hereafter be deemed too polite, claſſical, obſcure, and refined, to be read, and entirely above human comprehenſion. Paſtorals are pretty enough—for thoſe that like them—but to me Thyrſis is one of the moſt inſipid fellows I ever converſed with; and as for Corridon, I do not chuſe his company. Elegies and epiſtles are very fine to thoſe to whom they are addreſſed;

and

and as for epic poems, I am generally able to discover the whole plan in reading the two first pages.

Tragedies, however, as they are now made, are good instructive moral *sermons* enough; and it would be a fault not to be pleased with *good things*. There I learn several great truths; as, that it is impossible to see into the ways of futurity; that punishment always attends the villain; that love is the fond soother of the human breast; that we should not resist Heaven's will, for in resisting Heaven's will, 'Heaven's will is resisted; with several other sentiments equally new, delicate, and striking. Every new tragedy, therefore, I shall go to see; for reflections of this nature make a tolerable harmony, when mixed up with a proper quantity of drum, trumpet, thunder, lightning, or the scene-shifter's whistle. Adieu.

LETTER XCVIII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

I Had some intentions lately of going to visit Bedlam, the place where those who go mad are confined. I went to wait upon the man in black to be my conductor, but I found him preparing to go to Westminster Hall, where the English hold their courts of justice. It gave me some surprize to find my friend engaged in a law-suit, but more so when he informed me that it had been depending for several years. 'How is 'it possible,' cried I, 'for a man who 'knows the world to go to law! I am 'well acquainted with the courts of 'justice in China; they resemble rat-'traps every one of them, nothing 'more easy to get in, but to get out 'again is attended with some difficulty, 'and more cunning than rats are ge-'nerally found to possess!'

'Faith,' replied my friend, 'I should 'not have gone to law, but that I was 'assured of success before I began; 'things were presented to me in so al-'luring a light, that I thought by 'barely declaring myself a candidate for 'the prize, I had nothing more to do 'but to enjoy the fruits of the victory. 'Thus have I been upon the eve of an 'imaginary triumph every term these 'ten years; have travelled forward with 'victory ever in my view, but ever out of 'reach: however, at present, I fancy we 'have hampered our antagonist in such 'a manner, that, without some unfore-'seen demur, we shall this very day lay 'him fairly on his back.'

'If things be so situated,' said I, 'I 'do not care if I attend you to the 'courts, and partake in the pleasure of 'your success. But, pr'ythee,' continued I, as we set forward, 'what 'reasons have you to think an affair at 'last concluded, which has given so 'many former disappointments?'—'My lawyer tells me,' returned he, 'that I have Salkeld and Ventris strong 'in my favour, and that there are no 'less than fifteen cases in point.'—'I 'understand,' said I, 'those are two 'of your judges who have already de-'clared their opinions.'—'Pardon me,' replied my friend; 'Salkeld and Ventris 'are lawyers who some hundred years 'ago gave their opinion on cases similar 'to mine; these opinions which make 'for me my lawyer is to cite, and those 'opinions which look another way are 'cited by the lawyer employed by my 'antagonist: as I observed, I have Sal-'keld and Ventris for me, he has Coke 'and Hales for him, and he that has 'most opinions is most likely to carry 'his cause.'—'But where is the neces-'sity,' cried I, 'of prolonging a suit 'by citing the opinions and reports of 'others, since the same good sense which 'determined lawyers in former ages 'may serve to guide your judges at this 'day? They at that time gave their 'opinions only from the light of rea-'son; your judges have the same light 'at present to direct them; let me even 'add, a greater, as in former ages there 'were many prejudices from which the 'present is happily free. If arguing 'from authorities be exploded from 'every other branch of learning, why 'should it be particularly adhered to in 'this? I plainly foresee how such a me-'thod of investigation must embarrass 'every suit, and even perplex the stu-'dent;

'dent; ceremonies will be multiplied, 'formalities must encrease, and more 'time will thus be spent in learning the 'arts of litigation than in the discovery 'of right.'

'I see,' cries my friend, 'that you 'are for a speedy administration of jus-'tice; but all the world will grant, that 'the more time that is taken up in con-'sidering any subject, the better it will 'be understood. Besides, it is the boast 'of an Englishman, that his property 'is secure, and all the world will grant 'that a deliberate administration of 'justice is the best way to *secure his 'property*. Why have we so many 'lawyers, but to *secure our property?* 'Why so many formalities, but to *se-'cure our property?* Not less than one 'hundred thousand families live in opu-'lence, elegance, and ease; merely by '*securing our property*.'

'To embarrass justice,' returned I, 'by a multiplicity of laws, or to hazard 'it by a confidence in our judges, are, 'I grant, the opposite rocks on which 'legislative wisdom has ever split; in 'one case, the client resembles that em-'peror who is said to have been suffo-'cated with the bed-clothes which 'were only designed to keep him warm; 'in the other, to that town which let 'the enemy take possession of it's walls, 'in order to shew the world how little 'they depended upon aught but cou-'rage for safety.—But, bless me! what 'numbers do I see here—all in black! '—How is it possible that half this mul-'titude find employment?'—'Nothing 'so easily conceived,' returned my com-panion; 'they live by watching each 'other. For instance, the catchpole 'watches the man in debt, the attorney 'watches the catchpole, the counsellor 'watches the attorney, the solicitor the 'counsellor, and all find sufficient em-'ployment.'—'I conceive you,' in-terrupted I, 'they watch each other, 'but it is the client that pays them all 'for watching; it puts me in mind of 'a Chinese fable, which is intituled, "Five Animals at a Meal."

'A grasshopper, filled with dew, was 'merrily singing under a shade; a 'whangam, that eats grasshoppers, had 'marked it for it's prey, and was just 'stretching forth to devour it; a ser-'pent, that had for a long time fed only 'on whangams, was coiled up to fasten 'on the whangam; a yellow bird was 'just upon the wing to dart upon the 'serpent; a hawk had just stooped from 'above to seize the yellow bird; all 'were intent on their prey, and un-'mindful of their danger: so the 'whangam eat the grasshopper, the ser-'pent eat the whangam, the yellow 'bird the serpent, and the hawk the 'yellow bird; when sousing from on 'high, a vulture gobbled up the hawk, 'grasshopper, whangam, and all, in a 'moment.'

I had scarce finished my fable, when the lawyer came to inform my friend, that his cause was put off till another term, that money was wanted to retain, and that all the world was of opinion, that the very next hearing would bring him off victorious. 'If so, then,' cries my friend, 'I believe it will be my 'wisest way to continue the cause for 'another term; and, in the mean time, 'my friend here and I will go and see 'Bedlam.' Adieu.

LETTER XCIX.

FROM THE SAME.

I Lately received a visit from the little beau, who I found had assumed a new flow of spirits with a new suit of cloaths. Our discourse happened to turn upon the different treatment of the fair-sex here and in Asia, with the influence of beauty in refining our manners and improving our conversation.

I soon perceived he was strongly prejudiced in favour of the Asiatic method of treating the sex, and that it was impossible to persuade him, but that a man was happier who had four wives at his command, than he who had only one. 'It is true,' cries he, 'your 'men of fashion in the East are slaves, 'and under some terrors of having their 'throats squeezed by a bow-string; but 'what then? they can find ample con-'solation in a seraglio; they make in-'deed an indifferent figure in conver-'sation abroad, but then they have a 'seraglio

'seraglio to console them at home. I 'am told they have no balls, drums, 'nor operas, but then they have got a 'seraglio; they may be deprived of 'wine and French cookery, but have a 'seraglio: a seraglio, a seraglio, my 'dear creature, wipes off every incon-'venience in the world!

'Besides, I am told, your Asiatic 'beauties are the most convenient wo-'men alive, for they have no souls; po-'sitively there is nothing in nature I 'should like so much as ladies without 'souls; soul, here, is the utter ruin 'of half the sex. A girl of eighteen 'shall have soul enough to spend an 'hundred pounds in the turning of a 'trump. Her mother shall have soul 'enough to ride a sweep-stake match at 'a horse-race; her maiden aunt shall 'have soul enough to purchase the fur-'niture of a whole toy-shop; and others 'shall have soul enough to behave as if 'they had no souls at all.'

'With respect to the soul,' interrupted I, 'the Asiatics are much kinder 'to the fair-sex than you imagine; in-'stead of one soul, Fohi, the idol of 'China, gives every woman three; the 'Bramines give them fifteen; and even 'Mahomet himself no where excludes 'the sex from Paradise. Abulfeda re-'ports, that an old woman one day 'importuning him to know what she 'ought to do in order to gain Paradise? —"My good lady," answered the pro-'phet, "old women never get there." —"What, never get to Paradise!" 'returned the matron, in a fury. "Never," says he, "for they always "grow young by the way."'

'No, Sir,' continued I, 'the men 'of Asia behave with more deference to 'the sex than you seem to imagine. As 'you of Europe say grace upon sitting 'down to dinner, so it is the custom in 'China to say grace when a man goes 'to bed to his wife.'—'And may I 'die,' returned my companion, 'but 'a very pretty ceremony! For, seri-'ously, Sir, I see no reason why a 'man should not be as grateful in one 'situation as in the other. Upon ho-'nour, I always find myself much 'more disposed to gratitude, on the 'couch of a fine woman, than upon 'sitting down to a surloin of beef.'

'Another ceremony,' said I, resuming the conversation, 'in favour of the 'sex amongst us, is the bride's being 'allowed, after marriage, *her three 'days of freedom*. During this inter-'val, a thousand extravagancies are 'practised by either sex. The lady is 'placed upon the nuptial bed, and 'numberless monkey-tricks are played 'round to divert her. One gentleman 'smells her perfumed handkerchief, 'another attempts to untie her garters, 'a third pulls off her shoe to play hunt 'the slipper, another pretends to be an 'idiot, and endeavours to raise a laugh 'by grimacing; in the mean time, the 'glass goes briskly about, till ladies, 'gentlemen, wife, husband, and all, 'are mixed together in one inundation 'of arrack-punch.'

'Strike me dumb, deaf, and blind,' cried my companion, 'but very pretty! 'There is some sense in your Chinese 'ladies condescensions! but among us, 'you shall scarce find one of the whole 'sex that shall hold her good humour 'for three days together. No later 'than yesterday I happened to say some 'civil things to a citizen's wife of my 'acquaintance, not because I loved, but 'because I had charity; and what do 'you think was the tender creature's 'reply? Only, that she detested my pig-'tail wig, high-heeled shoes, and sal-'low complexion! That is all. No-'thing more!—Yes, by the heavens, 'though she was more ugly than an 'unpainted actress, I found her more 'insolent than a thorough-bred woman 'of quality!'

He was proceeding in this wild manner, when his invective was interrupted by the man in black, who entered the apartment, introducing his niece, a young lady of exquisite beauty. Her very appearance was sufficient to silence the severest satirist of the sex; easy without pride, and free without impudence, she seemed capable of supplying every sense with pleasure; her looks, her conversation, were natural and unconstrained; she had neither been taught to languish nor ogle, to laugh without a jest, or sigh without sorrow. I found that she had just returned from abroad, and had been conversant in the manners of the world. Curiosity prompted me to ask several questions, but she declined them all. I own I never found myself so strongly prejudiced in favour of apparent merit before; and could willing-

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ly have prolonged our converſation, but the company after ſome time withdrew. Juſt, however, before the little beau took his leave, he called me aſide, and requeſted I would change him a twenty pound bill; which, as I was incapable of doing, he was contented with borrowing half a crown. Adieu.

LETTER C.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO HINGPO, BY THE WAY OF MOSCOW.

FEW virtues have been more praiſed by moraliſts, than generoſity; every practical treatiſe of ethics tends to encreaſe our ſenſibility of the diſtreſſes of others, and to relax the graſp of frugality. Philoſophers that are poor, praiſe it becauſe they are gainers by it's effects; and the opulent Seneca himſelf has written a treatiſe on benefits, though he was known to give nothing away.

But among the many who have enforced the duty of giving, I am ſurpriſed there are none to inculcate the ignominy of receiving, to ſhew that by every favour we accept, we in ſome meaſure forfeit our native freedom, and that a ſtate of continual dependance on the generoſity of others is a life of gradual debaſement.

Were men taught to deſpiſe the receiving obligations with the ſame force of reaſoning and declamation that they are inſtructed to confer them, we might then ſee every perſon in ſociety filling up the requiſite duties of his ſtation with chearful induſtry, neither relaxed by hope, nor ſullen from diſappointment.

Every favour a man receives, in ſome meaſure ſinks him below his dignity; and in proportion to the value of the benefit, or the frequency of it's acceptance, he gives up ſo much of his natural independence. He, therefore, who thrives upon the unmerited bounty of another, if he has any ſenſibility, ſuffers the worſt of ſervitude; the ſhackled ſlave may murmur without reproach, but the humble dependant is taxed with ingratitude upon every ſymptom of diſcontent; the one may rave round the walls of his cell, but the other lingers in all the ſilence of mental confinement. To encreaſe his diſtreſs, every new obligation but adds to the former load which kept the vigorous mind from riſing; till at laſt, elaſtic no longer, it ſhapes itſelf to conſtraint, and puts on habitual ſervility.

It is thus with the feeling mind; but there are ſome who, born without any ſhare of ſenſibility, receive favour after favour, and ſtill cringe for more; who accept the offer of generoſity with as little reluctance as the wages of merit, and even make thanks for paſt benefits an indirect petition for new: ſuch, I grant, can ſuffer no debaſement from dependence, ſince they were originally as vile as was poſſible to be; dependence degrades only the ingenuous, but leaves the ſordid mind in priſtine meanneſs. In this manner, therefore, long continued generoſity is miſplaced, or it is injurious; it either finds a man worthleſs, or it makes him ſo; and true it is, that the perſon who is contented to be *often* obliged, ought not to have been obliged at all.

Yet, while I deſcribe the meanneſs of a life of continued dependence, I would not be thought to include thoſe natural or political ſubordinations which ſubſiſt in every ſociety; for in ſuch, though dependence is exacted from the inferior, yet the obligation on either ſide is mutual. The ſon muſt rely upon his parent for ſupport, but the parent lies under the ſame obligations to give that the other has to expect; the ſubordinate officer muſt receive the commands of his ſuperior, but for this obedience the former has a right to demand an intercourſe of favour: ſuch is not the dependence I would depreciate, but that where every expected favour muſt be the reſult of mere benevolence in the giver, where the benefit can be kept without remorſe, or transferred without injuſtice. The character of a legacy-hunter, for inſtance, is deteſtable in ſome countries, and deſpicable in all: this univerſal contempt of a man who infringes upon none of the laws of ſociety, ſome moraliſts have arraigned as a popular and unjuſt prejudice; never conſidering the neceſſary degradations a wretch muſt undergo, who previouſly expects to grow rich by benefits, without

out having either natural or social claims to enforce his petitions.

But this intercourse of benefaction and acknowledgment is often injurious even to the giver as well as the receiver. A man can gain but little knowledge of himself, or of the world, amidst a circle of those whom hope or gratitude has gathered round him; their unceasing humiliations must necessarily encrease his comparative magnitude, for all men measure their own abilities by those of their company: thus, being taught to over-rate his merit, he in reality lessens it; encreasing in confidence, but not in power, his professions end in empty boast, his undertakings in shameful disappointment.

It is perhaps one of the severest misfortunes of the great, that they are, in general, obliged to live among men whose real value is lessened by dependence, and whose minds are enslaved by obligation. The humble companion may have at first accepted patronage with generous views; but soon he feels the mortifying influence of conscious inferiority, by degrees sinks into a flatterer, and from flattery at last degenerates into stupid veneration. To remedy this, the great often dismiss their old dependents, and take new. Such changes are falsely imputed to levity, falsehood, or caprice, in the patron, since they may be more justly ascribed to the client's gradual deterioration.

No, my son, a life of independence is generally a life of virtue. It is that which fits the soul for every generous flight of humanity, freedom, and friendship. To give should be our pleasure, but to receive our shame; serenity, health, and affluence, attend the desire of rising by labour; misery, repentance, and disrespect, that of succeeding by extorted benevolence. The man who can thank himself alone for the happiness he enjoys is truly blessed; and lovely, far more lovely, the sturdy gloom of laborious indigence, than the fawning simper of thriving adulation. Adieu.

LETTER CI.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

IN every society, some men are born to teach, and others to receive instruction; some to work, and others to enjoy in idleness the fruits of their industry; some to govern, and others to obey. Every people, how free soever, must be contented to give up part of their liberty and judgment to those who govern, in exchange for their hopes of security; and the motives which first influenced their choice in the election of their governors, should ever be weighed against the succeeding apparent inconsistencies of their conduct. All cannot be rulers, and men are generally best governed by a few. In making way through the intricacies of business, the smallest obstacles are apt to retard the execution of what is to be planned by a multiplicity of counsels; the judgment of one alone being always fittest for winding through the labyrinths of intrigue, and the obstructions of disappointment. A serpent, which, as the fable observes, is furnished with one head and many tails, is much more capable of subsistence and expedition, than another which is furnished with but one tail and many heads.

Obvious as these truths are, the people of this country seem insensible of their force. Not satisfied with the advantages of internal peace and opulence, they still murmur at their governors, and interfere in the execution of their designs; as if they wanted to be something more than happy. But as the Europeans instruct by argument, and the Asiatics mostly by narration, were I to address them, I should convey my sentiments in the following story.

Takupi had long been prime minister of Tipartala, a fertile country that stretches along the western confines of China. During his administration, whatever advantages could be derived from arts, learning, and commerce, were seen to bless the people; nor were

the neceſſary precautions of providing for the ſecurity of the ſtate forgotten. It often happens, however, that when men are poſſeſſed of all they want, they then begin to find torment from imaginary afflictions, and leſſen their preſent enjoyments, by foreboding that thoſe enjoyments are to have an end. The people now, therefore, endeavoured to find out grievances; and after ſome ſearch, actually began to think themſelves aggrieved. A petition againſt the enormities of Takupi was carried to the throne in due form; and the queen who governed the country, willing to ſatisfy her ſubjects, appointed a day in which his accuſers ſhould be heard, and the miniſter ſhould ſtand upon his defence.

The day being arrived, and the miniſter brought before the tribunal, a carrier, who ſupplied the city with fiſh, appeared among the number of his accuſers. He exclaimed, that it was the cuſtom, time immemorial, for carriers to bring their fiſh upon an horſe in a hamper; which being placed on one ſide, and balanced by a ſtone on the other, was thus conveyed with eaſe and ſafety: but that the priſoner, moved either by a ſpirit of innovation, or perhaps bribed by the hamper-makers, had obliged all carriers to uſe the ſtone no longer, but balance one hamper with another; an order entirely repugnant to the cuſtoms of all antiquity, and thoſe of the kingdom of Tipartala in particular.

The carrier finiſhed; and the whole court ſhook their heads at the innovating miniſter: when a ſecond witneſs appeared. He was inſpector of the city-buildings, and accuſed the diſgraced favourite of having given orders for the demolition of an ancient ruin, which obſtructed the paſſage through one of the principal ſtreets. He obſerved, that ſuch buildings were noble monuments of barbarous antiquity; contributed finely to ſhew how little their anceſtors underſtood of architecture: and for that reaſon ſuch monuments ſhould be held ſacred, and ſuffered gradually to decay.

The laſt witneſs now appeared. This was a widow, who had laudably attempted to burn herſelf upon her huſband's funeral-pile. But the innovating miniſter had prevented the execution of her deſign, and was inſenſible to her tears, proteſtations, and entreaties.

The queen could have pardoned the two former offences; but this laſt was conſidered as ſo groſs an injury to the ſex, and ſo directly contrary to all the cuſtoms of antiquity, that it called for immediate juſtice. 'What!' cried the queen, 'not ſuffer a woman to burn herſelf when ſhe thinks proper! The ſex are to be very prettily tutored, no doubt, if they muſt be reſtrained from entertaining their female friends now and then with a fried wife, or roaſted acquaintance. I ſentence the criminal to be baniſhed my preſence for ever, for his injurious treatment of the ſex.'

Takupi had been hitherto ſilent, and ſpoke only to ſhew the ſincerity of his reſignation. 'Great Queen!' cried he, 'I acknowledge my crime; and ſince I am to be baniſhed, I beg it may be to ſome ruined town, or deſolate village, in the country I have governed. I ſhall find ſome pleaſure in improving the ſoil, and bringing back a ſpirit of induſtry among the inhabitants.' His requeſt appearing reaſonable, it was immediately complied with; and a courtier had orders to fix upon a place of baniſhment anſwering the miniſter's deſcription. After ſome months ſearch, however, the enquiry proved fruitleſs; neither a deſolate village, nor a ruined town, was found in the kingdom. 'Alas!' ſaid Takupi then to the queen, 'how can that country be ill governed which has neither a deſolate village nor a ruined town in it?' The queen perceived the juſtice of his expoſtulation, and the miniſter was received into more than former favour.

LETTER

LETTER CII.

FROM THE SAME.

THE ladies here are by no means such ardent gamesters as the women of Asia. In this respect I must do the English justice; for I love to praise where applause is justly merited. Nothing more common in China, than to see two women of fashion continue gaming till one has won all the other's cloaths, and stripped her quite naked; the winner thus marching off in a double suit of finery, and the loser shrinking behind in the primitive simplicity of nature.

No doubt you remember when Shang, our maiden aunt, played with a sharper. First her money went; then her trinkets were produced; her cloaths followed piece by piece soon after: when she had thus played herself quite naked, being a woman of spirit, and willing to pursue *her own*, she staked her teeth. Fortune was against her even here, and her teeth followed her cloaths; at last she played for her left-eye; and, oh, hard fate, this too she lost! However, she had the consolation of biting the sharper; for he never perceived that it was made of glass till it became his own.

How happy, my friend, are the English ladies, who never rise to such an inordinance of passion! Though the sex here are naturally fond of games of chance, and are taught to manage games of skill from their infancy, yet they never pursue ill fortune with such amazing intrepidity. Indeed I may entirely acquit them of ever playing—I mean of playing for their eyes or their teeth.

It is true, they often stake their fortune, their beauty, health, and reputations, at a gaming-table. It even sometimes happens, that they play their husbands into jail; yet still they preserve a decorum unknown to our wives and daughters of China. I have been present at a route in this country, where a woman of fashion, after losing her money, has sat writhing in all the agonies of bad luck; and yet, after all, never once attempted to strip a single petticoat, or cover the board, as her last stake, with her head-cloaths.

However, though I praise their moderation at play, I must not conceal their assiduity. In China, our women, except upon some great days, are never permitted to finger a dice-box; but here every day seems to be a festival; and night itself, which gives others rest, only serves to encrease the female gamester's industry. I have been told of an old lady in the country, who being given over by the physicians, played with the curate of her parish to pass the time away: having won all his money, she next proposed playing for her funeral charges; the proposal was accepted; but unfortunately the lady expired just as she had taken in her game.

There are some passions which, though differently pursued, are attended with equal consequences in every country: here they game with more perseverance, there with greater fury; here they strip their families, there they strip themselves naked. A lady in China, who indulges a passion for gaming, often becomes a drunkard; and by flourishing a dice-box in one hand, she generally comes to brandish a dram-cup in the other. Far be it from me to say there are any who drink drams in England; but it is natural to suppose, that when a lady has lost every thing else but her honour, she will be apt to toss that into the bargain; and, grown insensible of nicer feelings, behave like the Spaniard, who, when all his money was gone, endeavoured to borrow more, by offering to pawn his whisker. Adieu.

LETTER CIII.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO ***, MERCHANT IN AMSTERDAM.

I Have just received a letter from my son, in which he informs me of the fruitlessness of his endeavours to recover the lady with whom he fled from Persia. He strives to cover, under the appearance of fortitude, a heart torn with anxiety and disappointment. I have offered little consolation; since that but too frequently feeds the sorrow which it pretends to deplore, and strengthens the impression which nothing but the external rubs of time and accident can thoroughly efface.

He informs me of his intentions of quitting Moscow the first opportunity, and travelling by land to Amsterdam. I must therefore, upon his arrival, entreat the continuance of your friendship; and beg of you to provide him with proper directions for finding me in London. You can scarcely be sensible of the joy I expect upon seeing him once more: the ties between the father and the son, among us of China, are much more closely drawn than with you of Europe.

The remittances sent me from Argun to Moscow, came in safety. I cannot sufficiently admire that spirit of honesty which prevails through the whole country of Siberia: perhaps the savages of that desolate region are the only untutored people of the globe that cultivate the moral virtues, even without knowing that their actions merit praise. I have been told surprising things of their goodness, benevolence, and generosity; and the uninterrupted commerce between China and Russia serves as a collateral confirmation.

'Let us,' says the Chinese law-giver, 'admire the rude virtues of the ignorant, but rather imitate the delicate morals of the polite.' In the country where I reside, though honesty and benevolence be not so congenial, yet art supplies the place of nature. Though here every vice is carried to excess, yet every virtue is practised also with unexampled superiority. A city like this is the soil for great virtues and great vices: the villain can soon improve here in the deepest mysteries of deceiving; and the practical philosopher can every day meet new incitements to mend his honest intentions. There are no pleasures, sensual or sentimental, which this city does not produce; yet, I know not how, I could not be content to reside here for life. There is something so seducing in that spot in which we first had existence; that nothing but it can please: whatever vicissitudes we experience in life, however we toil, or wheresoever we wander, our fatigued wishes still recur to home for tranquillity; we long to die in that spot which gave us birth, and in that pleasing expectation opiate every calamity.

You now, therefore, perceive that I have some intentions of leaving this country; and yet my designed departure fills me with reluctance and regret. Though the friendships of travellers are generally more transient than vernal snows, still I feel an uneasiness at breaking the connections I have formed since my arrival; particularly I shall have no small pain in leaving my usual companion, guide, and instructor.

I shall wait for the arrival of my son before I set out. He shall be my companion in every intended journey for the future; in his company I can support the fatigues of the way with redoubled ardour, pleased at once with conveying instruction, and exacting obedience. Adieu.

LETTER CIV.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

OUR scholars of China have a most profound veneration for forms. A first-rate beauty never studied the decorums of dress with more assiduity. They may properly enough be said to be cloathed with wisdom from head

head to foot; they have their philosophical caps, and philosophical whiskers; their philosophical slippers, and philosophical fans; there is even a philosophical standard for measuring the nails; and yet, with all this seeming wisdom, they are often found to be mere empty pretenders.

A philosophical beau is not so frequent in Europe; yet I am told that such characters are found here. I mean, such as punctually support all the decorums of learning without being really very profound, or naturally possessed of a fine understanding; who labour hard to attain the titular honours attending literary merit; who flatter others in order to be flattered in turn; and only study to be thought students.

A character of this kind generally receives company in his study, in all the pensive formality of slippers, night-gown, and easy-chair. The table is covered with a large book, which is always kept open, and never read; his solitary hours being dedicated to dozing, mending pens, feeling his pulse, peeping through the microscope, and sometimes reading amusing books, which he condemns in company. His library is preserved with the most religious neatness; and is generally a repository of scarce books, which bear an high price, because too dull or useless to become common by the ordinary methods of publication.

Such men are generally candidates for admittance into literary clubs, academies, and institutions, where they regularly meet to give and receive a little instruction and a great deal of praise. In conversation they never betray ignorance, because they never seem to receive information. Offer a new observation, they have heard it before; pinch them in an argument, and they reply with a sneer.

Yet, how trifling soever these little arts may appear, they answer one valuable purpose, of gaining the practisers the esteem they wish for. The bounds of a man's knowledge are easily concealed, if he has but prudence; but all can readily see and admire a gilt library, a set of long nails, a silver standish, or a well-combed whisker, who are incapable of distinguishing a dunce.

When Father Matthew, the first European missionary, entered China, the court was informed that he possessed great skill in astronomy; he was therefore sent for and examined. The established astronomers of state undertook this task; and made their report to the emperor, that his skill was but very superficial, and no way comparable to their own. The missionary, however, appealed from their judgment to experience, and challenged them to calculate an eclipse of the moon that was to happen a few nights following. 'What,' said some, 'shall a Barbarian, without 'nails, pretend to vie with men in 'astronomy, who have made it the study of their lives; with men who know 'half the knowable characters of 'words, who wear scientifical caps and 'slippers, and who have gone through 'every literary degree with applause?' They accepted the challenge, confident of success. The eclipse began: the Chinese produced a most splendid apparatus, and were fifteen minutes wrong; the missionary, with a single instrument, was exact to a second. This was convincing; but the court astronomers were not to be convinced; instead of acknowledging their error, they assured the emperor that their calculations were certainly exact, but that the stranger without nails had actually bewitched the moon. 'Well, then,' cries the good emperor, smiling at their ignorance, 'you shall still continue to be 'servants of the moon; but I constitute 'this man her controuler.'

China is thus replete with men, whose only pretensions to knowledge arise from external circumstances; and in Europe every country abounds with them in proportion to it's ignorance. Spain and Flanders, who are behind the rest of Europe in learning, at least three centuries, have twenty literary titles and marks of distinction unknown in France or England: they have their *Clarissimi* and *Preclarissimi*, their *Accuratissimi* and *Minutissimi*: a round cap entitles one student to argue, and a square cap permits another to teach; while a cap with a tassel almost sanctifies the head it happens to cover. But where true knowledge is cultivated, these formalities begin to disappear; the ermined cowl, the solemn beard, and sweeping train, are laid aside; philosophers dress, and talk, and think, like other men; and lamb-skin dressers, and cap-makers,

ers, and tail-carriers, now deplore a literary.

For my own part, my friend, I have seen enough of presuming ignorance, never to venerate wisdom but where it actually appears. I have received literary titles and distinctions myself; and, by the quantity of my own wisdom, know how very little wisdom they can confer. Adieu.

LETTER CV.

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI, TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN, IN CHINA.

THE time for the young king's coronation approaches; the great and the little world look forward with impatience. A knight from the country, who has brought up his family to see and be seen on this occasion, has taken all the lower part of the house where I lodge. His wife is laying in a large quantity of silks, which the mercer tells her are to be fashionable next season; and Miss, her daughter, has actually had her ears bored previous to the ceremony. In all this bustle of preparation I am considered as mere lumber, and have been shoved up two stories higher to make room for others my landlady seems perfectly convinced are my betters; but whom, before me, she is contented with only calling very good company.

The little beau, who has now forced himself into my intimacy, was yesterday giving me a most minute detail of the intended procession. All men are eloquent upon their favourite topic; and this seemed peculiarly adapted to the size and turn of his understanding. His whole mind was blazoned over with a variety of glittering images; coronets, escutcheons, lace, fringe, tassels, stones, bugles, and spun glass. 'Here,' cried he, 'Garter is to walk; and there 'Rouge Dragon marches with the 'escutcheons on his back. Here Cla-'rencieux moves forward; and there 'Blue Mantle disdains to be left be-'hind. Here the Aldermen march 'two and two; and there the undaunt-'ed Champion of England, no way 'terrified at the very numerous appear-'ance of gentlemen and ladies, rides 'forward in compleat armour, and 'with an intrepid air throws down his 'glove. Ah,' continued he, 'should 'any be so hardy as to take up that fa-'tal glove, and so accept the challenge, 'we should see fine sport; the champion 'would shew him no mercy; he would 'soon teach him all his passes, with a 'witness. However, I am afraid we 'shall have none willing to try it with 'him upon the approaching occasion, 'for two reasons; first, because his 'antagonist would stand a chance of 'being killed in the single combat; and, 'secondly, because if he escapes the 'champion's arm, he would certainly 'be hanged for treason. No, no, I 'fancy none will be so hardy as to dis-'pute it with a champion like him in-'ured to arms; and we shall probably 'see him prancing unmolested away, 'holding his bridle thus in one hand, 'and brandishing his dram-cup in the 'other.'

Some men have a manner of describing which only wraps the subject in more than former obscurity: thus I was unable, with all my companion's volubility, to form a distinct idea of the intended procession. I was certain that the inauguration of a king should be conducted with solemnity and religious awe; and I could not be persuaded that there was much solemnity in this description. 'If this be true,' cried I to myself, 'the people of Europe surely have a strange manner of mixing 'solemn and fantastic images together; 'pictures at once replete with burlesque 'and the sublime. At a time when 'the king enters into the most solemn 'compact with his people, nothing 'surely should be admitted to diminish 'from the real majesty of the ceremo-'ny. A ludicrous image brought in 'at such a time throws an air of ridi-'cule upon the whole. It some way 'resembles a picture I have seen, de-'signed by Albert Durer; where, a-'midst all the solemnity of that awful 'scene, a Deity judging, and a tremb-

'ling

king world awaiting the decree, he has introduced a merry mortal trundling his scolding wife to hell in a wheel-barrow.

My companion, who mistook my silence during this interval of reflection for the rapture of astonishment, proceeded to describe those frivolous parts of the shew that mostly struck his imagination; and to assure me, that if I staid in this country some months longer I should see fine things. 'For my own 'part,' continued he, 'I know already 'of fifteen suits of cloaths, that would 'stand on one end with gold lace, all 'designed to be first shewn there; and 'as for diamonds, rubies, emeralds, 'and pearls, we shall see them as thick 'as brass nails in a sedan-chair. And 'then we are all to walk so majestically 'thus; this foot always behind the foot 'before. The ladies are to fling nose-'gays; the court-poets to scatter verses; 'the spectators are to be all in full 'dress; Mrs. Tibbs in a new sacque, 'ruffles, and frenched hair; look where 'you will, one thing finer than ano-'ther; Mrs. Tibbs curtesies to the 'Duchess; her Grace returns the com-'pliment with a bow. "Largess," 'cries the Herald. "Make room," 'cries the Gentleman Usher. "Knock "him down," cries the Guard. Ah!' continued he, amazed at his own description, 'what an astonishing scene of 'grandeur can art produce from the 'smallest circumstance, when it thus 'actually turns to wonder one man 'putting on another man's hat!'

I now found his mind was entirely set upon the fopperies of the pageant, and quite regardless of the real meaning of such costly preparations. 'Pageants,' says Bacon, 'are pretty things; but we 'should rather study to make them ele-'gant than expensive.' Processions, cavalcades, and all that fund of gay frippery furnished out by taylors, barbers, and tire-women, mechanically influence the mind into veneration: an emperor, in his night-cap, would not meet with half the respect of an emperor with a glittering crown. Politics resemble religion; attempting to divest either of ceremony, is the most certain method of bringing either into contempt. The weak must have their inducements to admiration as well as the wise; and it is the business of a sensible government to impress all ranks with a sense of subordination, whether this be effected by a diamond buckle or a virtuous edict, a sumptuary law, or a glass necklace.

This interval of reflection only gave my companion spirits to begin his description afresh; and as a greater inducement to raise my curiosity, he informed me of the vast sums that were given by the spectators for places. 'That the ceremony must be fine,' cries he, 'is very evident from the fine price 'that is paid for seeing it. Several la-'dies have assured me, they could will-'ingly part with one eye, rather than be 'prevented from looking on with the 'other. Come, come,' continues he, 'I have a friend, who, for my sake, 'will supply us with places at the most 'reasonable rates; I will take care you 'shall not be imposed upon; and he will 'inform you of the use, finery, rapture, 'splendour, and enchantment, of the 'whole ceremony, better than I.'

Follies often repeated lose their absurdity, and assume the appearance of reason: his arguments were so often, and so strongly enforced, that I had actually some thoughts of becoming a spectator. We accordingly went together to bespeak a place; but guess my surprise, when the man demanded a purse of gold for a single seat! I could hardly believe him serious upon making the demand. 'Prithee, friend,' cried I, 'after I have paid twenty pounds 'for sitting here an hour or two, can I 'bring a part of the Coronation back?' —'No, Sir.'—'How long can I live 'upon it after I have come away?'—'Not long, Sir.'—'Can a Coronation 'cloath, feed, or fatten me?'—'Sir,' replied the man, 'you seem to be under 'a mistake; all that you can bring away 'is the pleasure of having it to say that 'you saw the Coronation.'—'Blast 'me!' cries Tibbs, 'if that be all, 'there is no need of paying for that, 'since I am resolved to have that plea-'sure whether I am there or no!'

I am conscious, my friend, that this is but a very confused description of the intended ceremony. You may object, that I neither settle rank, precedency, nor place; that I seem ignorant whether Gules walk before or behind Garter; that I have neither mentioned the dimensions of a Lord's cap, nor measured the

the length of a Lady's tail. I know your delight is in minute deſcription; and this I am unhappily diſqualified from furniſhing; yet, upon the whole, I fancy it will be no way comparable to the magnificence of our late Emperor Whangti's proceſſion when he was married to the moon, at which Fum Hoam himſelf preſided in perſon. Adieu.

LETTER CVI.

TO THE SAME.

IT was formerly the cuſtom here, when men of diſtinction died, for their ſurviving acquaintance to throw each a ſlight preſent into the grave. Several things of little value were made uſe of for that purpoſe; perfumes, reliques, ſpices, bitter herbs, camomile, wormwood, and verſes. This cuſtom, however, is almoſt diſcontinued; and nothing but verſes alone are now laviſhed on ſuch occaſions; an oblation which they ſuppoſe may be interred with the dead without any injury to the living.

Upon the death of the great, therefore, the poets and undertakers are ſure of employment. While one provides the long cloak, black ſtaff, and mourning coach; the other produces the paſtoral or elegy, the monody or apotheoſis. The nobility need be under no apprehenſions, but die as faſt as they think proper; the poet and undertaker are ready to ſupply them; theſe can find metaphorical tears and family eſcutcheons at half an hour's warning; and when the one has ſoberly laid the body in the grave, the other is ready to fix it figuratively among the ſtars.

There are ſeveral ways of being poetically ſorrowful on ſuch occaſions. The bard is now ſome penſive youth of ſcience, who ſits deploring among the tombs; again he is Thyrſis, complaining in a circle of harmleſs ſheep. Now Britannia ſits upon her own ſhore, and gives a looſe to maternal tenderneſs; at another time, Parnaſſus, even the mountain Parnaſſus, gives way to ſorrow, and is bathed in tears of diſtreſs.

But the moſt uſual manner is this: Damon meets Menalcas, who has got a moſt gloomy countenance. The ſhepherd aſks his friend whence that look of diſtreſs? to which the other replies, that Pollio is no more. 'If that be the 'caſe then,' cries Damon, 'let us re-'tire to yonder bower at ſome diſtance 'off, where the cypreſs and the jeſſamine 'add fragrance to the breeze; and let 'us weep alternately for Pollio, the 'friend of ſhepherds, and the patron of 'every muſe.'—'Ah,' returns his fellow ſhepherd, 'what think you rather 'of that grotto by the fountain ſide? 'the murmuring ſtream will help to aſ-'ſiſt our complaints; and a nightingale, 'on a neighbouring tree, will join her 'voice to the concert!' When the place is thus ſettled, they begin: the brook ſtands ſtill to hear their lamentations; the cows forget to graze; and the very tigers ſtart from the foreſt with ſympathetic concern. By the tombs of our anceſtors, my dear Fum, I am quite unaffected in all this diſtreſs: the whole is liquid laudanum to my ſpirits; and a tiger of common ſenſibility has twenty times more tenderneſs than I.

But though I could never weep with the complaining ſhepherd, yet I am ſometimes induced to pity the poet, whoſe trade is thus to make demi-gods and heroes for a dinner. There is not in nature a more diſmal figure than a man who ſits down to premeditated flattery; every ſtanza he writes tacitly reproaches the meanneſs of his occupation, till at laſt his ſtupidity becomes more ſtupid, and his dullneſs more diminutive.

I am amazed therefore that none have yet found out the ſecret of flattering the worthleſs, and yet of preſerving a ſafe conſcience. I have often wiſhed for ſome method by which a man might do himſelf and his deceaſed patron juſtice, without being under the hateful reproach of ſelf-conviction. After long lucubration, I have hit upon ſuch an expedient, and ſend you the ſpecimen of a poem upon the deceaſe of a great man, in which the flattery is perfectly fine, and yet the poet perfectly innocent.

ON THE DEATH OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE ***.

YE muses, pour the pitying tear
For Pollio snatch'd away:
O had he liv'd another year!
—*He had not dy'd to-day.*

O, were he born to bless mankind,
In virtuous times of yore,
Heroes themselves had fallen behind?
—*Whene'er he went before.*

How sad the groves and plains appear,
And sympathetic sheep;
Even pitying hills would drop a tear!
—*If hills could learn to weep.*

His bounty in exalted strain
Each bard might well display:
Since none implor'd relief in vain!
—*That went reliev'd away.*

And hark! I hear the tuneful throng;
His obsequies forbid.
He still shall live, shall live as long
—*As ever dead man did.*

LETTER CVII.

TO THE SAME.

IT is the most usual method in every report, first to examine it's probability, and then act as the conjuncture may require. The English, however, exert a different spirit in such circumstances; they first act, and, when too late, begin to examine. From a knowledge of this disposition, there are several here who make it their business to frame new reports at every convenient interval, all tending to denounce ruin both on their cotemporaries and their posterity. This denunciation is eagerly caught up by the public; away they fling to propagate the distress; sell out at one place, buy in at another, grumble at their governors, shout in mobs; and when they have thus, for some time, behaved like fools, sit down coolly to argue and talk wisdom, to puzzle each other with syllogism, and prepare for the next report that prevails, which is always attended with the same success.

Thus are they ever rising above one report only to sink into another. They resemble a dog in a well, pawing to get free. When he has raised his upper parts above water, and every spectator imagines him disengaged, his lower parts drag him down again, and sink him to the nose; he makes new efforts to emerge, and every effort increasing his weakness, only tends to sink him the deeper.

There are some here, who, I am told, make a tolerable subsistence by the credulity of their countrymen: as they find the public fond of blood, wounds, and death, they contrive political ruins suited to every month in the year. This month the people are to be eaten up by the French in flat-bottomed boats; the next by the soldiers, designed to beat the French back: now the people are going to jump down the gulph of luxury; and now nothing but an herring subscription can fish them up again. Time passes on; the report proves false; new circumstances produce new changes; but the people never change, they are persevering in folly.

In other countries those boding politicians would be left to fret over their own schemes alone, and grow splenetic without hopes of infecting others: but England seems to be the very region where spleen delights to dwell; a man not only can give an unbounded scope to the disorder in himself, but may, if he pleases, propagate it over the whole kingdom, with a certainty of success. He has only to cry out, That the government, the government is all wrong; that their schemes are leading to ruin; that Britons are no more: every good member of the commonwealth thinks it his duty, in such a case, to deplore the universal decadence with sympathetic sorrow, and, by fancying the constitution in a decay, absolutely to impair it's vigour.

This people would laugh at my simplicity, should I advise them to be less sanguine in harbouring gloomy predictions, and examine coolly before they attempted to complain. I have just heard a story, which, though transacted in a private family, serves very well to describe the behaviour of the whole nation, in cases of threatened calamity.

As there are public, so there are private incendiaries here. One of the last, either for the amusement of his friends, or to divert a fit of the spleen, lately sent a threatening letter to a worthy family in my neighbourhood, to this effect.

SIR,

KNOWING you to be very rich, and finding myself to be very poor, I think proper to inform you, that I have learned the secret of poisoning man, woman, and child, without danger of detection. Don't be uneasy, Sir; you may take your choice of being poisoned in a fortnight, or poisoned in a month, or poisoned in six weeks; you shall have full time to settle all your affairs. Though I'm poor, I love to do things like a gentleman. But, Sir, you must die; I have determined it within my own breast that you must die. Blood, Sir, blood is my trade; so I could wish you would this day six weeks take leave of your friends, wife, and family, for I cannot possibly allow you longer time. To convince you more certainly of the power of my art, by which you may know I speak truth, take this letter; when you have read it, tear off the seal, fold it up, and give it to your favourite Dutch mastiff that sits by the fire; he will swallow it, Sir, like a butter'd toast. In three hours four minutes after he has taken it, he will attempt to bite off his own tongue, and half an hour after burst asunder in twenty pieces. Blood, blood, blood! so no more at present from, Sir, your most obedient, most devoted humble servant to command till death.

You may easily imagine the consternation into which this letter threw the whole good-natured family. The poor man, to whom it was addressed, was the more surprized, as not knowing how he could merit such inveterate malice. All the friends of the family were convened; it was universally agreed, that it was a most terrible affair, and that the govrenment should be solicited to offer a reward and a pardon: a fellow of this kind would go on poisoning family after family; and it was impossible to say where the destruction would end. In pursuance of these determinations the government was applied to; strict search was made after the incendiary, but all in vain. At last, therefore, they recollected that the experiment was not yet tried upon the dog: the Dutch mastiff was brought up, and placed in the midst of the friends and relations, the seal was torn off, the pacquet folded up with care, and soon they found, to the great surprize of all—— that the dog would not eat the letter. Adieu.

LETTER CVIII.

TO THE SAME.

I Have frequently been amazed at the ignorance of almost all the European travellers, who have penetrated any considerable way eastward into Asia. They have been influenced either by motives of commerce or piety; and their accounts are such as might reasonably be expected from men of very narrow or very prejudiced education, the dictates of superstition, or the result of ignorance. Is it not surprizing, that in such a variety of adventurers not one single philosopher should be found; for as to the travels of Gemelli, the learned are long agreed that the whole is but an imposture?

There is scarce any country, how rude or uncultivated soever, where the inhabitants are not possessed of some peculiar secrets, either in nature or art, which might be transplanted with success; in Siberian Tartary, for instance, the natives extract a strong spirit from milk, which is a secret probably unknown to the chymists of Europe. In the most savage parts of India, they are possessed of the secret of dying vegetable substances scarlet; and of refining lead into a metal which, for hardness and colour, is little inferior to silver; not one of which secrets but would of Europe make a man's fortune. The power of the Asiatics in producing winds, or bringing down rain, the Europeans are apt to treat as fabulous, because they have no instances of the like nature among themselves; but they would have treated the secrets of gunpowder, and the mariner's compass, in the same manner, had

had they been told the Chinese used such arts before the invention was common with themselves at home.

Of all the English philosophers I most reverence Bacon, that great and hardy genius; he it is who allows of secrets yet unknown; who, undaunted by the seeming difficulties that oppose, prompts human curiosity to examine every part of nature, and even exhorts man to try whether he cannot subject the tempest, the thunder, and even earthquakes, to human controul. O did a man of his daring spirit, of his genius, penetration, and learning, travel to those countries which have been visited only by the superstitious and mercenary, what might not mankind expect! How would he enlighten the regions to which he travelled! and what a variety of knowledge and useful improvement would he not bring back in exchange!

There is probably no country so barbarous, that would not disclose all it knew, if it received from the traveller equivalent information; and I am apt to think, that a person, who was ready to give more knowledge than he received, would be welcome wherever he came. All his care in travelling should only be to suit his intellectual banquet to the people with whom he conversed: he should not attempt to teach the unlettered Tartar astronomy, nor yet instruct the polite Chinese in the ruder arts of subsistence; he should endeavour to improve the Barbarian in the secrets of living comfortably; and the inhabitant of a more refined country in the speculative pleasures of science. How much more nobly would a philosopher, thus employed, spend his time, than by sitting at home earnestly intent upon adding one star more to his catalogue; or one monster more to his collection; or still, if possible, more triflingly sedulous in the incatenation of fleas, or the sculpture of a cherry-stone!

I never consider this subject, without being surprized how none of those societies, so laudably established in England for the promotion of arts and learning, have never thought of sending one of their members into the most eastern parts of Asia to make what discoveries he was able. To be convinced of the utility of such an undertaking, let them but read the relations of their own travellers. It will be there found, that they are as often deceived themselves as they attempt to deceive others. The merchants tell us perhaps the price of different commodities, the methods of baling them up, and the properest manner for an European to preserve his health in the country. The missionary, on the other hand, informs us with what pleasure the country to which he was sent embraced Christianity, and the numbers he converted; what methods he took to keep Lent in a region where there was no fish, or the shifts he made to celebrate the rites of his religion in places where there was neither bread nor wine: such accounts, with the usual appendage of marriages and funerals, inscriptions, rivers, and mountains, make up the whole of an European traveller's diary; but as to all the secrets of which the inhabitants are possessed, those are universally attributed to magic; and when the traveller can give no other account of the wonders he sees performed, he very contentedly ascribes them to the power of the devil.

It was an usual observation of Boyle, the English chymist, that if every artist would but discover what new observations occurred to him in the exercise of his trade, philosophy would thence gain innumerable improvements. It may be observed, with still greater justice, that if the useful knowledge of every country, howsoever barbarous, was gleaned by a judicious observer, the advantages would be inestimable. Are there not, even in Europe, many useful inventions known or practised but in one place? The instrument, as example, for cutting down corn in Germany, is much more handy and expeditious, in my opinion, than the sickle used in England. The cheap and expeditious manner of making vinegar, without previous fermentation, is known only in a part of France. If such discoveries, therefore, remain still to be known at home, what funds of knowledge might not be collected in countries yet unexplored, or only passed through by ignorant travellers in hasty caravans!

The caution with which foreigners are received in Asia, may be alledged as an objection to such a design. But how readily have several European merchants found admission into regions the most suspecting, under the character of Sanjapins, or Northern pilgrims; to such not even China itself denies access.

To send out a traveller, properly qualified

qualified for these purposes, might be an object of national concern; it would in some measure repair the breaches made by ambition; and might shew that there were still some who boasted a greater name than that of patriots, who professed themselves lovers of men. The only difficulty would remain in chusing a proper person for so arduous an enterprize. He should be a man of a philosophical turn, one apt to deduce consequences of general utility from particular occurrences; neither swollen with pride, nor hardened by prejudice; neither wedded to one particular system, nor instructed only in one particular science; neither wholly a botanist, nor quite an antiquarian; his mind should be tinctured with miscellaneous knowledge, and his manners humanized by an intercourse with men. He should be, in some measure, an enthusiast to the design; fond of travelling, from a rapid imagination, and an innate love of change; furnished with a body capable of sustaining every fatigue, and an heart not easily terrified at danger.

Adieu.

LETTER CIX.

FROM THE SAME.

ONE of the principal tasks I had proposed to myself, on my arrival here, was to become acquainted with the names and characters of those now living, who, as scholars or wits, had acquired the greatest share of reputation. In order to succeed in this design, I fancied the surest method would be to begin my enquiry among the ignorant, judging that his fame would be greatest which was loud enough to be heard by the vulgar. Thus pre-disposed, I began the search; but only went in quest of disappointment and perplexity. I found every district had a peculiar famous man of it's own. Here the story-telling shoemaker had engrossed the admiration on one side of the street, while the bellman, who excelleth at a catch, was in quiet possession of the other. At one end of a lane the sexton was regarded as the greatest man alive; but I had not travelled half it's length, till I found an enthusiast teacher had divided his reputation. My landlady perceiving my design, was kind enough to offer me her advice in this affair. It was true, she observed, that she was no judge, but she knew what pleased herself; and if I would rest upon her judgment, I should set down Tom Collins as the most ingenious man in the world; for Tom was able to take off all mankind, and imitate, besides, a sow and pigs to perfection.

I now perceived, that taking my standard of reputation among the vulgar would swell my catalogue of great names above the size of a Court Calendar; I therefore discontinued this method of pursuit, and resolved to prosecute my enquiry in that usual residence of fame, a bookseller's shop. In consequence of this, I entreated the bookseller to let me know who were they who now made the greatest figure either in morals, wit, or learning. Without giving me a direct answer, he pulled a pamphlet from the shelf, The Young Attorney's Guide. — 'There, Sir,' cries he, 'there is a touch for you! fifteen hundred of these moved off in a day. I take the author of this pamphlet, either for title, preface, plan, body, or index, to be the compleatest hand in England.' I found it was vain to prosecute my enquiry, where my informer appeared so incompetent a judge of merit; so paying for the Young Attorney's Guide, which good manners obliged me to buy, I walked off.

My pursuit after famous men now brought me into a print-shop. 'Here,' thought I, 'the painter only reflects the public voice. As every man who deserved it had formerly his statue placed up in the Roman forum, so here, probably, the pictures of none but such as merit a place in our affections are held up for public sale.' But guess my surprize when I came to examine this depositary of noted faces; all distinctions were levelled here, as in the grave; and I could not but regard it as the catacomb of real merit! The brick-dust man took up as much room as the truncheoned hero, and the judge was

was elbowed by the thief-taker; quacks, pimps, and buffoons, encreased the groupe, and noted stallions only made room for more noted whores. I had read the works of some of the moderns, previous to my coming to England, with delight and approbation; but I found their faces had no place here; the walls were covered with the names of authors I had never known, or had endeavoured to forget; with the little self-advertising things of a day, who had forced themselves into fashion, but not into fame; I could read at the bottom of some pictures, the names of **, and ***, and ****, all equally candidates for the vulgar shout, and foremost to propagate their unblushing faces upon brass. My uneasiness, therefore, at not finding my few favourite names among the number, was now changed into congratulation; I could not avoid reflecting on the fine observation of Tacitus on a similar occasion. 'In this cavalcade of flattery,' cries the historian, 'neither the pictures of Brutus, Cassius, 'nor Cato, were to be seen, *eo clariores quia imagines eorum non deferebantur*, their absence being the strongest proof of their merit.'

'It is in vain,' cried I, 'to seek for 'true greatness among these monuments of the unburied dead; let me 'go among the tombs of those who are 'confessedly famous, and see if any 'have been lately deposited there who 'deserve the attention of posterity, and 'whose names may be transmitted to 'my distant friend, as an honour to the 'present age.' Determined in my pursuit, I paid a second visit to Westminster Abbey. There I found several new monuments erected to the memory of several great men; the names of the great men I absolutely forget, but I remember that Roubillac was the statuary who carved them. I could not help smiling at two modern epitaphs in particular; one of which praised the deceased for being *ortus ex antiqua stirpe*; the other commended the dead, because *hanc ædem suis sumptibus reædificavit*: the greatest merit of one consisted in his being descended from an illustrious house; the chief distinction of the other, that he had propped up an old house that was falling. 'Alas, alas!' cried I, 'such monuments as these confer honour, not upon the great men, but 'upon little Roubillac!'

Hitherto disappointed in my enquiry after the great of the present age, I was resolved to mix in company, and try what I could learn among critics in coffee-houses; and here it was that I heard my favourite names talked of even with inverted fame. A gentleman of exalted merit, as a writer, was branded in general terms as a bad man; another of exquisite delicacy as a poet, was reproached for wanting good-nature; a third was accused of free-thinking; and a fourth of having once been a player. 'Strange!' cried I, 'how unjust are 'mankind in the distribution of fame! 'The ignorant, among whom I sought 'at first, were willing to grant, but incapable of distinguishing, the virtues 'of those which deserved it; among 'those I now converse with, they know 'the proper objects of admiration, but 'mix envy with applause.'

Disappointed so often, I was now resolved to examine those characters in person of whom the world talked so freely; by conversing with men of real merit, I began to find out those characters which really deserved, though they strove to avoid, applause. I found the vulgar admiration entirely misplaced, and malevolence without it's sting. The truly great, possessed of numerous small faults, and shining virtues, preserve a sublime in morals as in writing. They who have attained an excellence in either, commit numberless transgressions, observable to the meanest understanding. The ignorant critic, and dull remarker, can readily spy blemishes in eloquence or morals, whose sentiments are not sufficiently elevated to observe a beauty; but such are judges neither of books nor of life; they can diminish no solid reputation by their censure, nor bestow a lasting character by their applause: in short, I found by my search, that such only can confer real fame upon others, who have merit themselves to deserve it.

Adieu.

LETTER CX.

TO THE SAME.

THERE are numberleſs employments in the courts of the Eaſtern monarchs utterly unpractiſed and unknown in Europe. They have no ſuch offices, for inſtance, as the emperor's ear-tickler, or tooth-picker; they have never introduced at the courts the mandarine appointed to bear the royal tobacco-box, or the grave director of the imperial exercitations in the ſeraglio. Yet, I am ſurpriſed that the Engliſh have imitated us in none of theſe particulars, as they are generally pleaſed with every thing that comes from China, and exceſſively fond of creating new and uſeleſs employments. They have filled their houſes with our furniture, their public gardens with our fire-works, and their very ponds with our fiſh: our courtiers, my friend, are the fiſh, and the furniture they ſhould have imported; our courtiers would fill up the neceſſary ceremonies of a court better than thoſe of Europe; would be contented with receiving large ſalaries for doing little; whereas ſome of this country are at preſent diſcontented, though they receive large ſalaries for doing nothing.

I lately, therefore, had thoughts of publiſhing a propoſal here for the admiſſion of ſome new Eaſtern offices and titles into their Court Regiſter. As I conſider myſelf in the light of a Coſmopolite, I find as much ſatisfaction in ſcheming for the countries in which I happen to reſide, as for that in which I was born.

The fineſt apartments in the palace of Pegu are frequently infeſted with rats. Theſe the religion of the country ſtrictly forbids the people to kill. In ſuch circumſtances, therefore, they are obliged to have recourſe to ſome great man of the court, who is willing to free the royal apartments even at the hazard of his ſalvation. After a weak monarch's reign, the quantity of court vermin in every corner of the palace is ſurpriſing; but a prudent king, and a vigilant officer, ſoon drives them from their ſanctuaries behind the mats and the tapeſtry, and effectually frees the court. Such an officer in England would in my opinion be ſerviceable at this juncture; for if, as I am told, the palace be old, much vermin muſt undoubtedly have taken refuge behind the wainſcot and hangings. A miniſter ſhould therefore be inveſted with the title and dignities of Court Vermin Killer; he ſhould have full power either to baniſh, take, poiſon, or deſtroy them, with enchantments, traps, ferrets, or ratſbane. He might be permitted to brandiſh his beſom without remorſe, and bruſh down every part of the furniture, without ſparing a ſingle cobweb, however ſacred by long preſcription. I communicated this propoſal ſome days ago in a company of the firſt diſtinction, and enjoying the moſt honourable offices of the ſtate. Among the number were the Inſpector of Great Britain, Mr. Henriques the Director of the Miniſtry, Ben. Victor the Treaſurer, John Lockman the Secretary, and the Conductor of the Imperial Magazine. They all acquieſced in the utility of my propoſal; but were apprehenſive it might meet with ſome obſtructions from court upholſterers and chamber-maids, who would object to it from the demolitions of the furniture, and the dangerous uſe of ferrets and ratſbane.

My next propoſal is rather more general than the former, and might probably meet with leſs oppoſition. Though no people in the world flatter each other more than the Engliſh, I know none who underſtand the art leſs, and flatter with ſuch little refinement. Their panegyric, like a Tartar feaſt, is indeed ſerved up with profuſion, but their cookery is inſupportable. A client here ſhall dreſs up a fricaſſee for his patron, that ſhall offend an ordinary noſe before it enters the room. A town ſhall ſend up their addreſs to a great miniſter, which ſhall prove at once a ſatire on the miniſter and themſelves. If the favourite of the day ſits, or ſtands, or ſleeps, there are poets to put it into verſe, and prieſts to preach it in the pulpit. In order, therefore, to free both thoſe who praiſe, and thoſe who are praiſed, from a duty probably diſagreeable to both, I

would

would conſtitute profeſſed flatterers here as in ſeveral courts of India. Theſe are appointed in the courts of their princes, to inſtruct the people where to exclaim with admiration, and where to lay an emphaſis of praiſe. But an officer of this kind is always in waiting when the emperor converſes in a familiar manner among his Rajas and other nobility. At every ſentence, when the monarch pauſes, and ſmiles at what he has been ſaying, the Karamatman, as this officer is called, is to take it for granted, that his majeſty has ſaid a good thing. Upon which he cries out—'Karamat! Karamat!—a miracle! a miracle!' and throws up his hands and his eyes in extaſy. This is echoed by the courtiers around, while the emperor ſits all this time in ſullen ſatisfaction, enjoying the triumph of his joke, or ſtudying a new repartee.

I would have ſuch an officer placed at every great man's table in England. By frequent practice he might ſoon become a perfect maſter of the art, and in time would turn out pleaſing to his patron, no way troubleſome to himſelf, and might prevent the nauſeous attempts of many more ignorant pretenders. The clergy here, I am convinced, would reliſh this propoſal. It would provide places for ſeveral of them. And indeed, by ſome of their late productions, many appear to have qualified themſelves as candidates for this office already.

But my laſt propoſal I take to be of the utmoſt importance. Our neighbour, the Empreſs of Ruſſia, has, you may remember, inſtituted an order of female knighthood. The Empreſs of Germany has alſo inſtituted another; the Chineſe have had ſuch an order time immemorial. I am amazed the Engliſh have never come into ſuch an inſtitution. When I conſider what kind of men are made knights here, it appears ſtrange that they have never conferred this honour upon women. They make cheeſemongers and paſtry-cooks knights; then, why not their wives? They have called up tallow-chandlers to maintain the hardy profeſſion of chivalry and arms; then, why not their wives? Haberdaſhers are ſworn, as I ſuppoſe all knights muſt be ſworn, 'never to fly 'in time of mellay or battle, to maintain and uphold the noble eſtate of 'chivalry, with horſe harniſhe and 'other knightlye habiliments.' Haberdaſhers, I ſay, are ſworn to all this; then, why not their wives? Certain I am, their wives underſtand fighting and feats of mellay and battle better than they; and as for knightlye horſe and harniſhe, it is probable both know nothing more than the harneſs of a one-horſe chaiſe. No, no, my friend, inſtead of conferring any order upon the huſbands, I would knight their wives. However, the ſtate ſhould not be troubled with a new inſtitution upon this occaſion. Some ancient exploded order might be revived, which would furniſh both a motto and a name; the ladies might be permitted to chuſe for themſelves. There are, for inſtance, the obſolete orders of the Dragon in Germany, of the Rue in Scotland, and the Porcupine in France; all well-ſounding names, and very applicable to my intended female inſtitution. Adieu.

LETTER CXI.

TO THE SAME.

RELIGIOUS ſects in England are far more numerous than in China. Every man who has intereſt enough to hire a conventicle here, may ſet up for himſelf and ſell off a new religion. The ſellers of the neweſt pattern at preſent give extreme good bargains; and let their diſciples have a great deal of *confidence* for very little money.

Their ſhops are much frequented, and their cuſtomers every day encreaſing; for people are naturally fond of going to Paradiſe at as ſmall expence as poſſible.

Yet, you muſt not conceive this modern ſect as differing in opinion from thoſe of the eſtabliſhed religion: difference of opinion, indeed, formerly divided their ſectaries, and ſometimes drew their armies to the field; white gowns and black mantles, flapped hats and croſs pocket-holes, were once the obvious cauſes of quarrel; men then had

had ſome reaſon for fighting, they knew what they fought about; but at preſent they are arrived at ſuch refinement in religion-making, that they have actually formed a new ſect without a new opinion; they quarrel for opinions, they both equally defend; they hate each other, and that is all the difference between them.

But though their principles are the ſame, their practice is ſomewhat different. Thoſe of the eſtabliſhed religion laugh when they are pleaſed, and their groans are ſeldom extorted but by pain or danger. The new ſect, on the contrary, weep for their amuſement, and uſe little muſic except a chorus of ſighs and groans, or tunes that are made to imitate groaning. Laughter is their averſion; lovers court each other from the lamentations; the bridegroom approaches the nuptial couch in ſorrowful ſolemnity, and the bride looks more diſmal than an undertaker's ſhop. Dancing round the room is, with them, running in a direct line to the devil; and as for gaming, though but in jeſt, they would ſooner play with a rattle-ſnake's tail than finger a dice-box.

By this time, you perceive that I am deſcribing a ſect of enthuſiaſts; and you have already compared them with the Faquirs, Bramins, and Talapoins, of the Eaſt. Among theſe, you know, are generations that have been never known to ſmile, and voluntary affliction makes up all the merit they can boaſt of. Enthuſiaſms in every country produce the ſame effects; ſtick the Faquir with pins, or confine the Bramin to a vermin hoſpital, ſpread the Talapoin on the ground, or load the ſectary's brow with contrition; thoſe worſhippers who diſcard the light of reaſon are ever gloomy; their fears increaſe in proportion to their ignorance, as men are continually under apprehenſions who walk in darkneſs.

Yet there is ſtill a ſtronger reaſon for the enthuſiaſt's being an enemy to laughter; namely, his being himſelf ſo proper an object of ridicule. It is remarkable, that the propagators of falſe doctrines have ever been averſe to mirth, and always begin by recommending gravity, when they intended to diſſeminate impoſture. Fohi, the idol of China, is repreſented as having never laughed; Zoroaſter, the leader of the Bramins, is ſaid to have laughed but twice, upon his coming into the world, and upon his leaving it; and Mahomet himſelf, though a lover of pleaſure, was a profeſſed oppoſer of gaiety. Upon a certain occaſion, telling his followers that they would all appear naked at the reſurrection, his favourite wife repreſented ſuch an aſſembly as immodeſt and unbecoming. 'Fooliſh woman,' cried the grave prophet, 'though the 'whole aſſembly be naked, on that day 'they ſhall have forgotten to laugh.' Men like him oppoſed ridicule, becauſe they knew it to be a moſt formidable antagoniſt, and preached up gravity to conceal their own want of importance.

Ridicule has ever been the moſt powerful enemy of enthuſiaſm, and properly the only antagoniſt that can be oppoſed to it with ſucceſs. Perſecution only ſerves to propagate new religions; they acquire freſh vigour between the executioner and the ax, and, like ſome vivacious inſects, multiply by diſſection. It is alſo impoſſible to combat enthuſiaſm with reaſon; for though it makes a ſhew of reſiſtance, it ſoon eludes the preſſure, refers you to diſtinctions not to be underſtood, and feelings which it cannot explain. A man who would endeavour to fix an enthuſiaſt by argument, might as well attempt to ſpread quickſilver with his fingers. The only way to conquer a viſionary is to deſpiſe him; the ſtake, the faggot, and the diſputing doctor, in ſome meaſure ennoble the opinions they are brought to oppoſe; they are harmleſs againſt innovating pride; contempt alone is truly dreadful. Hunters generally know the moſt vulnerable part of the beaſts they purſue, by the care which every animal takes to defend the ſide which is weakeſt; on what ſide the enthuſiaſt is moſt vulnerable, may be known by the care which he takes in the beginning to work his diſciples into gravity, and guard them againſt the power of ridicule.

When Philip the Second was King of Spain, there was a conteſt in Salamanca between two orders of friars for ſuperiority. The legend of one ſide contained more extraordinary miracles, but the legend of the other was reckoned moſt authentic. They reviled each other, as is uſual in diſputes of divinity, the people were divided into factions, and a civil war appeared unavoidable. In order to prevent ſuch an imminent

calamity,

calamity, the combatants were prevailed upon to ſubmit their legions to the fiery trial, and that which came forth untouched by the fire was to have the victory, and to be honoured with a double ſhare of reverence. Whenever the people flock to ſee a miracle, it is an hundred to one but that they ſee a miracle; incredible, therefore, were the numbers that were gathered round upon this occaſion; the friars on each ſide approached, and confidently threw their reſpective legends into the flames; when, lo, to the utter diſappointment of all the aſſembly, inſtead of a miracle, both legends were conſumed! Nothing but thus turning both parties into contempt, could have prevented the effuſion of blood. The people now laughed at their former folly, and wondered why they fell out. Adieu.

LETTER CXII.

TO THE SAME.

THE Engliſh are at preſent employed in celebrating a feaſt, which becomes general every ſeventh year; the parliament of the nation being then diſſolved, and another appointed to be choſen. This ſolemnity falls infinitely ſhort of our feaſt of the lanthorns in magnificence and ſplendour; it is alſo ſurpaſſed by others of the Eaſt in unanimity and pure devotion; but no feſtival in the world can compare with it for eating. Their eating, indeed, amazes me. Had I five hundred heads, and were each head furniſhed with brains, yet would they all be inſufficient to compute the number of cows, pigs, geeſe, and turkies, which, upon this occaſion, die for the good of their country!

To ſay the truth, eating ſeems to make a grand ingredient in all Engliſh parties of zeal, buſineſs, or amuſement. When a church is to be built, or an hoſpital endowed, the directors aſſemble, and inſtead of conſulting upon it, they eat upon it; by which means the buſineſs goes forward with ſucceſs. When the poor are to be relieved, the officers appointed to dole out public charity, aſſemble and eat upon it. Nor has it ever been known that they filled the bellies of the poor till they had previouſly ſatisfied their own. But in the election of magiſtrates, the people ſeem to exceed all bounds; the merits of a candidate are often meaſured by the number of his treats; his conſtituents aſſemble, eat upon him, and lend their applauſe, not to his integrity or ſenſe, but the quantities of his beef and brandy.

And yet I could forgive this people their plentiful meals on this occaſion, as it is extremely natural for every man to eat a great deal when he gets it for nothing; but what amazes me is, that all this good living no way contributes to improve their good-humour. On the contrary, they ſeem to loſe their temper as they loſe their appetites; every morſel they ſwallow, and every glaſs they pour down, ſerves to encreaſe their animoſity. Many an honeſt man, before as harmleſs as a tame rabbit, when loaded with a ſingle election dinner, has become more dangerous than a charged culverin. Upon one of theſe occaſions, I have actually ſeen a bloody-minded man-milliner ſally forth at the head of a mob, determined to face a deſperate paſtry-cook, who was general of the oppoſite party.

But you muſt not ſuppoſe they are without a pretext for thus beating each other. On the contrary, no man here is ſo uncivilized as to beat his neighbour without producing very ſufficient reaſons. One candidate, for inſtance, treats with gin, a ſpirit of their own manufacture; another, always drinks brandy imported from abroad. Brandy is a wholeſome liquor; gin a liquor wholly their own. This then furniſhes an obvious cauſe of quarrel; whether it be moſt reaſonable to get drunk with gin, or get drunk with brandy? The mob meet upon the debate; fight themſelves ſober; and then draw off to get drunk again, and charge for another encounter. So that the Engliſh may now properly be ſaid to be engaged in war; ſince, while they are ſubduing their enemies abroad, they are breaking each other's heads at home.

I lately made an excurſion to a neighbouring village, in order to be a ſpecta-

tor of the ceremonies practiſed upon this occaſion. I left town in company with three fiddlers, nine dozen of hams, and a corporation poet, which were deſigned as reinforcements to the gin-drinking party. We entered the town with a very good face; the fiddlers, no way intimidated by the enemy, kept handling their arms up the principal ſtreet. By this prudent manœuvre they took peaceable poſſeſſion of their head-quarters, amidſt the ſhouts of multitudes, who ſeemed perfectly rejoiced at hearing their muſic, but, above all, at ſeeing their bacon.

I muſt own, I could not avoid being pleaſed to ſee all ranks of people on this occaſion levelled into an equality, and the poor, in ſome meaſure, enjoying the primitive privileges of nature. If there was any diſtinction ſhewn, the loweſt of the people ſeemed to receive it from the rich. I could perceive a cobler with a levee at his door, and an haberdaſher giving audience from behind his counter. But my reflections were ſoon interrupted by a mob, who demanded whether I was for the diſtillery or the brewery? As theſe were terms with which I was totally unacquainted, I choſe at firſt to be ſilent; however, I know not what might have been the conſequence of my reſerve, had not the attention of the mob been called off to a ſkirmiſh between a brandy-drinker's cow and a gin-drinker's maſtiff, which turned out, greatly to the ſatisfaction of the mob, in favour of the maſtiff.

This ſpectacle, which afforded high entertainment, was at laſt ended by the appearance of one of the candidates, who came to harangue the mob; he made a very pathetic ſpeech upon the late exceſſive importation of foreign drams, and the down-fall of the diſtillery: I could ſee ſome of the audience ſhed tears. He was accompanied in his proceſſion by Mrs. Deputy and Mrs. Mayoreſs. Mrs. Deputy was not in the leaſt in liquor; and for Mrs. Mayoreſs, one of the ſpectators aſſured me in my ear that ſhe was a very fine woman before ſhe had the ſmall-pox.

Mixing with the crowd, I was now conducted to the hall where the magiſtrates are choſen; but what tongue can deſcribe this ſcene of confuſion! the whole crowd ſeemed equally inſpired with anger, jealouſy, politics, patriotiſm, and punch: I remarked one figure that was carried up by two men upon this occaſion. I at firſt began to pity his infirmities as natural, but ſoon found the fellow ſo drunk that he could not ſtand; another made his appearance to give his vote, but though he could ſtand, he actually loſt the uſe of his tongue, and remained ſilent; a third, who though exceſſively drunk, could both ſtand and ſpeak, being aſked the candidate's name for whom he voted, could be prevailed upon to make no other anſwer, but 'Tobacco and brandy.' In ſhort, an election-hall ſeems to be a theatre, where every paſſion is ſeen without diſguiſe; a ſchool where fools may readily become worſe, and where philoſophers may gather wiſdom. Adieu.

LETTER CXIII.

FROM THE SAME.

THE diſputes among the learned here are now carried on in a much more compendious manner than formerly. There was a time when folio was brought to oppoſe folio, and a champion was often liſted for life under the banners of a ſingle ſorites. At preſent, the controverſy is decided in a ſummary way; an epigram, or an acroſtic, finiſhes the debate, and the combatant, like the incurſive Tartar, advances and retires with a ſingle blow.

An important literary debate at preſent engroſſes the attention of the town. It is carried on with ſharpneſs, and a proper ſhare of this epigrammatical fury. An author, it ſeems, has taken an averſion to the faces of ſeveral players, and has written verſes to prove his diſlike; the players fall upon the author, and aſſure the town he muſt be dull, and their faces muſt be good, becauſe he wants a dinner; a critic comes to the poet's aſſiſtance, aſſerting that the verſes were perfectly original, and ſo ſmart, that he could never have written them

without the aſſiſtance of friends; the friends upon this arraign the critic, and plainly prove the verſes to be all the author's own. So at it they are all four together by the ears; the friends at the critic, the critic at the players, the players at the author, and the author at the players again. It is impoſſible to determine how this many-ſided conteſt will end, or which party to adhere to. The town, without ſiding with any, views the combat in ſuſpenſe, like the fabled hero of antiquity, who beheld the earth-born brothers give and receive mutual wounds, and fall by indiſcriminate deſtruction.

This is, in ſome meaſure, a ſtate of the preſent diſpute; but the combatants here differ in one reſpect from the champions of the fable. Every new wound only gives vigour for another blow; though they appear to ſtrike, they are, in fact, mutually ſwelling themſelves into conſideration, and thus advertiſing each other away into fame. 'To-day,' ſays one, 'my name ſhall 'be in the Gazette, the next day my 'rival's; people will naturally enquire 'about us: thus we ſhall at leaſt make 'a noiſe in the ſtreets, though we have 'got nothing to ſell.' I have read of a diſpute of a ſimilar nature, which was managed here about twenty years ago. Hildebrand Jacob, as I think he was called, and Charles Johnſon, were poets, both at that time poſſeſſed of great reputation; for Johnſon had written eleven plays acted with great ſucceſs; and Jacob, though he had written but five, had five times thanked the town for their unmerited applauſe. They ſoon became mutually enamoured of each other's talents; they wrote, they felt, they challenged the town, for each other. Johnſon aſſured the public, that no poet alive had the eaſy ſimplicity of Jacob; and Jacob exhibited Johnſon as a maſter-piece in the pathetic. Their mutual praiſe was not without effect; the town ſaw their plays, were in raptures, read, and, without cenſuring them, forgot them. So formidable an union, however, was ſoon oppoſed by Tibbald. Tibbald aſſerted, that the tragedies of one had faults, and the comedies of the other ſubſtituted wit for vivacity: the combined champions flew at him like tigers, arraigned the cenſurer's judgment, and impeached his ſincerity. It was a long time a diſpute among the learned, which was in fact the greateſt man, Jacob, Johnſon, or Tibbald; they had all written for the ſtage with great ſucceſs, their names were ſeen in almoſt every paper, and their works in every coffee-houſe. However, in the hotteſt of the diſpute, a fourth combatant made his appearance, and ſwept away the three combatants, tragedy, comedy, and all, into undiſtinguiſhed ruin.

From this time they ſeemed conſigned into the hands of criticiſm; ſcarce a day paſſed in which they were not arraigned as deteſted writers. The critics, theſe enemies of Dryden and Pope, were their enemies. So Jacob and Johnſon, inſtead of mending by criticiſm, called it envy; and becauſe Dryden and Pope were cenſured, they compared themſelves to Dryden and Pope.

But to return: the weapon chiefly uſed in the preſent controverſy is epigram; and certainly never was a keener made uſe of. They have diſcovered ſurpriſing ſharpneſs on both ſides. The firſt that came out upon this occaſion was a kind of new compoſition in this way, and might more properly be called an epigrammatic theſis than an epigram. It conſiſts, firſt, of an argument in proſe; next follows a motto from Roſcommon; then comes the epigram; and, laſtly, notes ſerving to explain the epigram. But you ſhall have it, with all it's decorations.

AN EPIGRAM.

ADDRESSED TO THE GENTLEMEN REFLECTED ON IN THE ROSCIAD, A POEM, BY THE AUTHOR.

'Worry'd with debts, and paſt all hopes of bail,
'His pen he proſtitutes, t'avoid a jaol.'

ROSCOM.

LET not the *hungry* Bavius' angry ſtroke
Awake reſentment, or your rage provoke;
But, pitying his diſtreſs, let virtue* ſhine,
And giving each your bounty †, *let him dine*;
For thus retain'd, as learned council can,
Each caſe, however bad, he'll new japan;
And, by a quick tranſition, plainly ſhow
'Twas no defect of your's, but *pocket low*,
That caus'd his *putrid kennel* to o'erflow.

The laſt lines are certainly executed in a very maſterly manner. It is of that ſpecies of argumentation called the

* Charity. † Settled at one ſhilling, the price of the poem.

perplexing. It effectually flings the antagonist into a mist; there is no answering it: the laugh is raised against him, while he is endeavouring to find out the jest. At once he shews that the author has a kennel, and that this kennel is putrid, and that this putrid kennel overflows. But why does it overflow? It overflows, because the author happens to have low pockets!

There was also another new attempt in this way; a prosaic epigram, which came out upon this occasion. This is so full of matter, that a critic might split it into fifteen epigrams, each properly fitted with it's sting. You shall see it.

TO G. C. AND R. L.

'Twas you, or I, or he, or all together,
'Twas one, both, three of them, they know not whether.
This I believe, between us, great or small,
You, I, he, wrote it not—'twas Churchill's all.

There, there is a perplex! I could have wished, to make it quite perfect, the author, as in the case before, had added notes. Almost every word admits a scholium, and a long one too. I, YOU, HE! Suppose a stranger should ask—'And who are you?' Here are three obscure persons spoken of, that may in a short time be utterly forgotten. Their names should have consequently been mentioned in notes at the bottom. But when the reader comes to the words *great* and *small*, the maze is inextricable. Here the stranger may dive for a mystery without ever reaching the bottom. Let him know, then, that *small* is a word purely introduced to make good rhyme; and *great* was a very proper word to keep *small* company.

Yet, by being thus a spectator of others dangers, I must own, I begin to tremble in this literary contest for my own. I begin to fear, that my challenge to Doctor Rock was unadvised, and has procured me more antagonists than I had at first expected. I have received private letters from several of the literati here that fill my soul with apprehension. I may safely aver, that 'I never gave any creature in this good 'city offence,' except only my rival Doctor Rock; yet by the letters I every day receive, and by some I have seen printed, I am arraigned at one time as being a dull fellow, at another, as being pert; I am here petulant, there I am heavy: by the head of my ancestors, they treat me with more inhumanity than a flying-fish! If I dive and run my nose to the bottom, there a devouring shark is ready to swallow me up; if I skim the surface, a pack of dolphins are at my tail to snap me; but when I take wing, and attempt to escape them by flight, I become a prey to every ravenous bird that winnows the bosom of the deep. Adieu.

LETTER CXIV.

TO THE SAME.

THE formalities, delays, and disappointments, that precede a treaty of marriage here, are usually as numerous as those previous to a treaty of peace. The laws of this country are finely calculated to promote all commerce, but the commerce between the sexes. Their encouragements for propagating hemp, madder, and tobacco, are indeed admirable! Marriages are the only commodity that meet with none.

Yet, from the vernal softness of the air, the verdure of the fields, the transparency of the streams, and the beauty of the women, I know few countries more proper to invite to courtship. Here Love might sport among painted lawns and warbling groves, and revel upon gales, wafting at once both fragrance and harmony. Yet, it seems, he has forsaken the island; and when a couple are now to be married, mutual love, or an union of minds, is the last and most trifling consideration. If their goods and chattels can be brought to unite, their sympathetic souls are ever ready to guarantee the treaty. The gentleman's mortgaged lawn becomes enamoured of the ladies marriageable grove; the match is struck up, and both parties are piously in love —according to act of parliament.

Thus they, who have fortune, are possessed at least of something that is lovely;

lovely; but I actually pity those that have none. I am told there was a time when ladies, with no other merit but youth, virtue, and beauty, had a chance for husbands, at least among the ministers of the church, or the officers of the army. The blush and innocence of sixteen was said to have a powerful influence over these two professions. But, of late, all the little traffic of blushing, ogling, dimpling, and smiling, has been forbidden by an act in that case wisely made and provided. A lady's whole cargo of smiles, sighs, and whispers, is declared utterly contraband, till she arrives in the warm latitudes of twenty-two, where commodities of this nature are too often found to decay. She is then permitted to dimple and smile, when the dimples and smiles begin to forsake her; and, when perhaps grown ugly, is charitably entrusted with an unlimited use of her charms. Her lovers, however, by this time have forsaken her; the captain has changed for another mistress; the priest himself leaves her in solitude to bewail her virginity; and she dies even without benefit of clergy.

Thus you find the Europeans discouraging love with as much earnestness as the rudest savage of Sofala. The Genius is surely now no more. In every region I find enemies in arms to oppress him. Avarice in Europe, jealousy in Persia, ceremony in China, poverty among the Tartars, and lust in Circassia, are all prepared to oppose his power. The Genius is certainly banished from earth, though once adored under such a variety of forms. He is no where to be found; and all that the ladies of each country can produce, are but a few trifling reliques as instances of his former residence and favour.

'The Genius of Love (says the Eastern Apologue) had long resided in the happy plains of Abra, where every breeze was health, and every sound produced tranquillity. His temple at first was crouded; but every age lessened the number of his votaries, or cooled their devotion. Perceiving, therefore, his altars at length quite deserted, he was resolved to remove to some more propitious region; and he apprized the fair sex of every country, where he could hope for a proper reception, to assert their right to his presence among them. In return to this proclamation, embassies were sent from every part of the world to invite him, and to display the superiority of their claims.

'And first the beauties of China appeared. No country could compare with them for modesty, either of look, dress, or behaviour; their eyes were never lifted from the ground; their robes of the most beautiful silk hid their hands, bosom, and neck, while their faces only were left uncovered. They indulged no airs that might express loose desire, and they seemed to study only the graces of inanimate beauty. Their black teeth and plucked eyebrows were, however, alledged by the Genius against them; but he set them entirely aside, when he came to examine their little feet.

'The beauties of Circassia next made their appearance. They advanced hand in hand, singing the most immodest airs, and leading up a dance in the most luxurious attitudes. Their dress was but half a covering; the neck, the left breast, and all the limbs, were exposed to view, which after some time seemed rather to satiate than inflame desire. The lily and the rose contended in forming their complexions; and a soft sleepiness of eye added irresistible poignance to their charms: but their beauties were obtruded, not offered, to their admirers; they seemed to give rather than receive courtship; and the Genius of Love dismissed them as unworthy his regard, since they exchanged the duties of love, and made themselves not the pursued, but the pursuing sex.

'The kingdom of Kashmire next produced it's charming deputies. This happy region seemed peculiarly sequestered by Nature for his abode. Shady mountains fenced it on one side from the scorching sun; and sea-born breezes, on the other, gave peculiar luxuriance to the air. Their complexions were of a bright yellow, that appeared almost transparent, while the crimson tulip seemed to blossom on their cheeks. Their features and limbs were delicate beyond the statuary's power to express; and their teeth whiter than their own ivory. He was almost persuaded to reside among them, when, unfortunately, one of the ladies talked of appointing his seraglio.

'In this procession the naked inhabitants of Southern America would not be left behind; their charms were found to surpass whatever the warmest imagination

nation could conceive; and ſerved to ſhew, that beauty could be perfect even with the ſeeming diſadvantage of a brown complexion. But their ſavage education rendered them utterly unqualified to make the proper uſe of their power; and they were rejected as being incapable of uniting mental with ſenſual ſatisfaction. In this manner the deputies of other kingdoms had their ſuits rejected: the black beauties of Benin, and the tawny daughters of Borneo; the women of Wida, with well ſcarred faces, and the hideous virgins of Cafraria; the ſquab ladies of Lapland, three feet high, and the giant fair ones of Patagonia.

'The beauties of Europe at laſt appeared: grace was in their ſteps, and ſenſibility ſate ſmiling in every eye. It was the univerſal opinion, while they were approaching, that they would prevail; and the Genius ſeemed to lend them his moſt favourable attention. They opened their pretenſions with the utmoſt modeſty; but, unfortunately, as their orator proceeded, ſhe happened to let fall the words 'Houſe in town, ſettlement, and pin-money.' Theſe ſeemingly harmleſs terms had inſtantly a ſurpriſing effect: the Genius, with ungovernable rage, burſt from amidſt the circle; and, waving his youthful pinions, left this earth, and flew back to thoſe ethereal manſions from whence he deſcended.

'The whole aſſembly was ſtruck with amazement: they now juſtly apprehended that female power would be no more, ſince Love had forſaken them. They continued ſome time thus in a ſtate of torpid deſpair; when it was propoſed by one of their number, that, ſince the real Genius had left them, in order to continue their power, they ſhould ſet up an idol in his ſtead, and that the ladies of every country ſhould furniſh him with what each liked beſt. This propoſal was inſtantly reliſhed and agreed to. An idol was formed by uniting the capricious gifts of all the aſſembly; though no way reſembling the departed Genius. The ladies of China furniſhed the monſter with wings; thoſe of Kaſhmire ſupplied him with horns; the dames of Europe clapped a purſe in his hand; and the virgins of Congo furniſhed him with a tail. Since that time, all the vows addreſſed to Love are in reality paid to the idol; but, as in other falſe religions, the adoration ſeems moſt fervent where the heart is leaſt ſincere.' Adieu.

LETTER CXV.

TO THE SAME.

MANKIND have ever been prone to expatiate in the praiſe of human nature. The dignity of man is a ſubject that has always been the favourite theme of humanity; they have declaimed with that oſtentation, which uſually accompanies ſuch as are ſure of having a partial audience; they have obtained victories, becauſe there were none to oppoſe. Yet, from all I have ever read or ſeen, men appear more apt to err by having too high, than by having too deſpicable an opinion of their nature; and by attempting to exalt their original place in the creation, depreſs their real value in ſociety.

The moſt ignorant nations have always been found to think moſt highly of themſelves. The Deity has ever been thought peculiarly concerned in their glory and preſervation; to have fought their battles, and inſpired their teachers: their wizards are ſaid to be familiar with Heaven; and every hero has a guard of angels, as well as men, to attend him. When the Portugueſe firſt came among the wretched inhabitants of the coaſt of Africa, theſe ſavage nations readily allowed the ſtrangers more ſkill in navigation and war; yet ſtill conſidered them, at beſt, but as uſeful ſervants brought to their coaſts, by their guardian ſerpent, to ſupply them with luxuries they could have lived without. Though they could grant the Portugueſe more riches, they could never allow them to have ſuch a king as their Tottimondelem, who wore a bracelet of ſhells round his neck, and whoſe legs were covered with ivory.

In this manner, examine a ſavage in the hiſtory of his country and predeceſſors;

sors; you ever find his warriors able to conquer armies, and his sages acquainted with more than possible knowledge: human nature is to him an unknown country; he thinks it capable of great things, because he is ignorant of it's boundaries; whatever can be conceived to be done, he allows to be possible; and whatever is possible he conjectures must have been done. He never measures the actions and powers of others by what himself is able to perform, nor makes a proper estimate of the greatness of his fellows, by bringing it to the standard of his own incapacity. He is satisfied to be one of a country where mighty things have been; and imagines the fancied power of others reflects a lustre on himself. Thus, by degrees, he loses the idea of his own insignificance in a confused notion of the extraordinary powers of humanity, and is willing to grant extraordinary gifts to every pretender, because unacquainted with their claims.

This is the reason why demi-gods and heroes have ever been erected in times or countries of ignorance and barbarity; they addressed a people who had high opinions of human nature, because they were ignorant how far it could extend; they addressed a people who were willing to allow that men should be gods, because they were yet imperfectly acquainted with God, and with man. These impostors knew, that all men are naturally fond of seeing something very great made from the little materials of humanity; that ignorant nations are not more proud of building a tower to reach heaven, or a pyramid to last for ages, than of raising up a demi-god of their own country and creation. The same pride that erects a colossus, or a pyramid, installs a god or an hero: but though the adoring savage can raise his colossus to the clouds, he can exalt the hero not one inch above the standard of humanity; incapable therefore of exalting the idol, he debases himself, and falls prostrate before him.

When man has thus acquired an erroneous idea of the dignity of his species, he and the gods become perfectly intimate; men are but angels, angels are but men, nay, but servants that stand in waiting to execute human commands. The Persians, for instance, thus address their prophet Haly *. 'I salute thee, 'glorious Creator, of whom the sun is 'but the shadow! Masterpiece of the 'Lord of human creatures, Great Star 'of Justice and Religion! The sea is 'not rich and liberal but by the gifts 'of thy munificent hands. The angel-'treasurer of heaven reaps his harvest 'in the fertile gardens of the purity of 'thy nature. The primum mobile would 'never dart the ball of the sun through 'the trunk of heaven, were it not to 'serve the morning out of the extreme 'love she has for thee. The angel Ga-'briel, messenger of truth, every day 'kisses the groundsil of thy gate. Were 'there a place more exalted than the 'most high throne of God, I would af-'firm it to be thy place, O master of 'the faithful! Gabriel, with all his art 'and knowledge, is but a mere scholar 'to thee.' Thus, my friend, men think proper to treat angels; but if indeed there be such an order of beings, with what a degree of satirical contempt must they listen to the songs of little mortals thus flattering each other! Thus to see creatures, wiser indeed than the monkey, and more active than the oyster, claiming to themselves the mastery of heaven; minims, the tenants of an atom, thus arrogating a partnership in the creation of universal Nature! Sure Heaven is kind that launches no thunder at those guilty heads; but it is kind, and regards their follies with pity, nor will destroy creatures that it loved into being.

But whatever success this practice of making demi-gods might have been attended with in barbarous nations, I do not know that any man became a god in a country where the inhabitants were refined. Such countries generally have too close an inspection into human weakness, to think it invested with celestial power. They sometimes indeed admit the gods of strangers, or of their ancestors, which had their existence in times of obscurity; their weakness being forgotten, while nothing but their power and their miracles were remembered. The Chinese, for instance, never had a god of their own country; the idols which the vulgar worship at this day were brought from the barbarous nations around them. The Roman em-

* Chardins' Travels, p. 402.

perors,

perors, who pretended to divinity, were generally taught by a poignard that they were mortal; and Alexander, though he passed among barbarous countries for a real god, could never persuade his polite countrymen into a similitude of thinking. The Lacedemonians shrewdly complied with his commands by the following sarcastic edict.

Ει Αλεξανδρος βυλεται ειναι Θεος, Θεος εςω.

Adieu.

LETTER CXVI.

TO THE SAME.

THERE is something irresistibly pleasing in the conversation of a fine woman; even though her tongue be silent, the eloquence of her eyes teaches wisdom. The mind sympathizes with the regularity of the object in view; and struck with external grace, vibrates into respondent harmony. In this agreeable disposition, I lately found myself in company with my friend and his niece. Our conversation turned upon love, which she seemed equally capable of defending and inspiring. We were each of different opinions upon this subject; the lady insisted that it was a natural and universal passion, and produced the happiness of those who cultivated it with proper precaution. My friend denied it to be the work of nature, but allowed it to have a real existence, and affirmed that it was of infinite service in refining society; while I, to keep up the dispute, affirmed it to be merely a name, first used by the cunning part of the fair-sex, and admitted by the silly part of ours; therefore no way more natural than taking snuff or chewing opium.

'How is it possible,' cried I, 'that such a passion can be natural, when our opinions even of beauty, which inspires it, are entirely the result of fashion and caprice? The ancients, who pretended to be connoisseurs in the art, have praised narrow foreheads, red hair, and eye-brows that joined each other over the nose. Such were the charms that once captivated Catullus, Ovid, and Anacreon. Ladies would at present be out of humour if their lovers praised them for such graces; and should an antique beauty now revive, her face would certainly be put under the discipline of the tweezer, forehead-cloth, and lead comb, before it could be seen in public company.

'But the difference between the ancients and moderns is not so great as between the different countries of the present world. A lover of Gongora, for instance, sighs for thick lips; a Chinese lover is poetical in praise of thin. In Circassia a straight nose is thought most consistent with beauty; cross but a mountain which separates it from the Tartars, and there flat noses, tawny skins, and eyes three inches asunder, are all the fashion. In Persia, and some other countries, a man, when he marries, chuses to have his bride a maid; in the Phillipine Islands, if a bridegroom happens to perceive on the first night that he is put off with a virgin, the marriage is declared void to all intents and purposes, and the bride sent back with disgrace. In some parts of the East, a woman of beauty, properly fed up for sale, often amounts to one hundred crowns; in the kingdom of Loango, ladies of the very best fashion are sold for a pig; queens, however, sell better, and sometimes amount to a cow. In short, turn even to England, do not I there see the beautiful part of the sex neglected; and none now marrying, or making love, but old men and old women that have saved money? Do not I see beauty, from fifteen to twenty-one, rendered null and void to all intents and purposes, and those six precious years of womanhood put under a statute of virginity? What! shall I call that rancid passion love, which passes between an old batchelor of fifty-six and a widow lady of forty-nine? Never! never! What advantage is society to reap from an intercourse, where

'where the big belly is ofteneſt on the
'man's ſide? Would any perſuade me
'that ſuch a paſſion was natural, un-
'leſs the human race were more fit for
'love as they approached the decline,
'and, like ſilk-worms, became breed-
'ers, juſt before they expired?'

'Whether love be natural or no,' replied my friend, gravely, 'it contri-
'butes to the happineſs of every ſociety
'into which it is introduced. All our
'pleaſures are ſhort, and can only
'charm at intervals; love is a method
'of protracting our greateſt pleaſure;
'and ſurely that gameſter, who plays
'the greateſt ſtake to the beſt advan-
'tage, will at the end of life riſe victo-
'rious. This was the opinion of Va-
'nini, who affirmed, "that every hour
"was loſt which was not ſpent in love."
'His accuſers were unable to compre-
'hend his meaning, and the poor ad-
'vocate for love was burned in flames,
'alas! no way metaphorical. But
'whatever advantages the individual
'may reap from this paſſion, ſociety
'will certainly be refined and improved
'by it's introduction: all laws, calcu-
'lated to diſcourage it, tend to embrute
'the ſpecies, and weaken the ſtate.
'Though it cannot plant morals in the
'human breaſt, it cultivates them when
'there: pity, generoſity, and honour,
'receive a brighter poliſh from it's aſ-
'ſiſtance; and a ſingle amour is ſuffi-
'cient entirely to bruſh off the clown.

'But it is an exotic of the moſt deli-
'cate conſtitution; it requires the
'greateſt art to introduce it into a ſtate,
'and the ſmalleſt diſcouragement is ſuf-
'ficient to repreſs it again. Let us
'only conſider with what eaſe it was
'formerly extinguiſhed in Rome, and
'with what difficulty it was lately re-
'vived in Europe: it ſeemed to ſleep
'for ages, and at laſt fought it's way
'among us through tilts, tournaments,
'dragons, and all the dreams of chi-
'valry. The reſt of the world, China
'only excepted, are, and have ever
'been, utter ſtrangers to it's delights
'and advantages. In other countries,
'as men find themſelves ſtronger than
'women, they lay a claim to a rigorous
'ſuperiority; this is natural, and love
'which gives up this natural advantage
'muſt certainly be the effect of art:
'an art calculated to lengthen out our
'happier moments, and add new graces
'to ſociety.'

'I entirely acquieſce in your ſenti-
'ments,' ſays the lady, 'with regard
'to the advantages of this paſſion, but
'cannot avoid giving it a nobler origin
'than you have been pleaſed to aſſign.
'I muſt think, that thoſe countries
'where it is rejected, are obliged to
'have recourſe to art to ſtifle ſo natural
'a production; and thoſe nations, where
'it is cultivated, only make nearer ad-
'vances to nature. The ſame efforts
'that are uſed in ſome places to ſuppreſs
'pity, and other natural paſſions, may
'have been employed to extinguiſh love.
'No nation, however unpoliſhed, is re-
'markable for innocence, that is not
'famous for paſſion; it has flouriſhed
'in the coldeſt, as well as the warmeſt,
'regions. Even in the ſultry wilds of
'Southern America, the lover is not
'ſatisfied with poſſeſſing his miſtreſs's
'perſon without having her mind.

"In all my Enna's beauties bleſt,
"Amidſt profuſion ſtill I pine;
"For though ſhe gives me up her breaſt,
"It's panting tenant is not mine *."

'But the effects of love are too violent
'to be the reſult of an artificial paſſion.
'Nor is it in the power of faſhion to
'force the conſtitution into thoſe changes
'which we every day obſerve. Several
'have died of it. Few lovers are un-
'acquainted with the fate of the two
'Italian lovers, Da Corſin and Julia
'Bellamano; who, after a long ſepa-
'ration, expired with pleaſure in each
'other's arms. Such inſtances are too
'ſtrong confirmations of the reality of
'the paſſion, and ſerve to ſhew, that
'ſuppreſſing it is but oppoſing the na-
'tural dictates of the heart.' Adieu.

* Tranſlation of a South-American Ode.

LETTER CXVII.

TO THE SAME.

THE clock just struck two, the expiring taper rises and sinks in the socket, the watchman forgets the hour in slumber, the laborious and the happy are at rest, and nothing wakes but meditation, guilt, revelry, and despair. The drunkard once more fills the destroying bowl, the robber walks his midnight round, and the suicide lifts his guilty arm against his own sacred person.

Let me no longer waste the night over the page of antiquity, or the sallies of cotemporary genius, but pursue the solitary walk where Vanity, ever changing, but a few hours past, walked before me; where she kept up the pageant; and now, like a froward child, seems hushed with her own importunities.

What a gloom hangs all around! The dying lamp feebly emits a yellow gleam; no sound is heard but of the chiming clock, or the distant watchdog. All the bustle of human pride is forgotten; an hour like this may well display the emptiness of human vanity!

There will come a time when this temporary solitude may be made continual; and the city itself, like it's inhabitants, fade away, and leave a desart in it's room!

What cities as great as this have once triumphed in existence, had their victories as great, joy as just, and as unbounded, and with short-sighted presumption, promised themselves immortality! Posterity can hardly trace the situation of some. The sorrowful traveller wanders over the awful ruins of others; and as he beholds he learns wisdom, and feels the transience of every sublunary possession.

'Here,' he cries, 'stood their citadel, now grown over with weeds; there their senate-house, but now the haunt of every noxious reptile; temples and theatres stood here, now only an undistinguished heap of ruin! They are fallen; for luxury and avarice first made them feeble. The rewards of state were conferred on amusing, and not on useful, members of society. Their riches and opulence invited the invaders; who, though at first repulsed, returned again, conquered by perseverance, and at last swept the defendants into undistinguished destruction!'

How few appear in those streets, which but some few hours ago were crouded! and those who appear, now no longer wear their daily mask, nor attempt to hide their lewdness or their misery!

But who are those who make the streets their couch, and find a short repose from wretchedness at the doors of the opulent? These are strangers, wanderers, and orphans; whose circumstances are too humble to expect redress, and whose distresses are too great even for pity. Their wretchedness excites rather horror than pity. Some are without the covering even of rags, and others emaciated with disease; the world has disclaimed them; society turns it's back upon their distress, and has given them up to nakedness and hunger. These poor shivering females have once seen happier days, and been flattered into beauty. They have been prostituted to the gay luxurious villain, and are now turned out to meet the severity of winter. Perhaps, now lying at the doors of their betrayers, they sue to wretches whose hearts are insensible; or debauchees who may curse, but will not relieve, them.

Why, why was I born a man, and yet see the sufferings of wretches I cannot relieve! Poor houseless creatures! the world will give you reproaches, but will not give you relief. The slightest misfortunes of the great, the most imaginary uneasinesses of the rich, are aggravated with all the power of eloquence, and held up to engage our attention and sympathetic sorrow. The poor weep unheeded; persecuted by every subordinate species of tyranny; and every law, which gives others security, becomes an enemy to them.

Why was this heart of mine formed with

with ſo much ſenſibility? or why was not my fortune adapted to it's impulſe? Tenderneſs, without a capacity of relieving, only makes the man who feels it more wretched than the object which ſues for aſſiſtance. Adieu.

LETTER CXVIII.

FUM HOAM, TO LIEN CHI ALTANGI, THE DISCONTENTED WANDERER, BY THE WAY OF MOSCOW.

I Have been juſt ſent upon an embaſſy to Japan; my commiſſion is to be diſpatched in four days, and you can hardly conceive the pleaſure I ſhall find upon reviſiting my native country. I ſhall leave with joy this proud, barbarous, inhoſpitable region, where every object conſpires to diminiſh my ſatisfaction, and encreaſe my patriotiſm.

But though I find the inhabitants ſavage, yet the Dutch merchants, who are permitted to trade hither, ſeem ſtill more deteſtable. They have raiſed my diſlike to Europe in general; by them I learn how low avarice can degrade human nature; how many indignities an European will ſuffer for gain.

I was preſent at an audience given by the emperor to the Dutch envoy, who had ſent ſeveral preſents to all the courtiers ſome days previous to his admiſſion; but he was obliged to attend thoſe deſigned for the emperor himſelf. From the accounts I had heard of this ceremony, my curioſity prompted me to be a ſpectator of the whole.

Firſt went the preſents, ſet out on beautiful enamelled tables, adorned with flowers, borne on mens ſhoulders, and followed by Japaneſe muſic and dancers. From ſo great reſpect paid to the gifts themſelves, I had fancied the donors muſt have received almoſt divine honours. But about a quarter of an hour after the preſents had been carried in triumph, the envoy and his train were brought forward. They were covered from head to foot with long black veils, which prevented their ſeeing; each led by a conductor choſen from the meaneſt of the people. In this diſhonourable manner having traverſed the city of Jedo, they at length arrived at the palace-gate; and after waiting half an hour, were admitted into the guard room. Here their eyes were uncovered, and in about an hour the gentleman-uſher introduced them into the hall of audience. The emperor was at length ſhewn ſitting in a kind of alcove at the upper end of the room, and the Dutch envoy was conducted towards the throne.

As ſoon as he had approached within a certain diſtance, the gentleman-uſher cried out with a loud voice—‘ *Holanda* ‘ *Capitan:*’ upon theſe words the envoy fell flat upon the ground, and crept upon his hands and feet towards the throne. Still approaching, he reared himſelf upon his knees, and then bowed his forehead to the ground. Theſe ceremonies being over, he was directed to withdraw, ſtill grovelling on his belly, and going backward like a lobſter.

Men muſt be exceſſively fond of riches, when they are earned with ſuch circumſtances of abject ſubmiſſion. Do the Europeans worſhip Heaven itſelf with marks of more profound reſpect? Do they confer thoſe honours on the Supreme of beings which they pay to a barbarous king, who gives them a permiſſion to purchaſe trinkets and porcelaine? What a glorious exchange, to forfeit their national honour, and even their title to humanity, for a ſcreen or a ſnuff-box!

If theſe ceremonies eſſayed in the firſt audience appeared mortifying, thoſe which are practiſed in the ſecond are infinitely more ſo. In the ſecond audience, the emperor and the ladies of court were placed behind lattices, in ſuch a manner as to ſee, without being ſeen. Here all the Europeans were directed to paſs in review, and grovel and act the ſerpent as before: with this ſpectacle the whole court ſeemed highly delighted. The ſtrangers were aſked a thouſand ridiculous queſtions; as their names and their ages: they were ordered to write, to ſtand upright, to ſit, to ſtop, to compliment each other, to be drunk, to ſpeak the Japaneſe language, to talk Dutch, to ſing, to eat; in ſhort, they were ordered to do all that could ſatisfy the curioſity of women.

Imagine, my dear Altangi, a ſet of grave

grave men thus transformed into buffoons, and acting a part every whit as honourable as that of those instructed animals which are shewn in the streets of Pekin to the mob on a holiday. Yet the ceremony did not end here, for every great lord of the court was to be visited in the same manner; and their ladies, who took the whim from their husbands, were all equally fond of seeing the strangers perform, even the children seeming highly diverted with the dancing Dutchmen.

'Alas!' cried I to myself, upon returning from such a spectacle, 'is this the nation which assumes such dignity at the court of Pekin? Is this that people that appear so proud at home, and in every country where they have the least authority? How does a love of gain transform the gravest of mankind into the most contemptible and ridiculous! I had rather continue poor all my life, than become rich at such a rate. Perish those riches which are acquired at the expence of my honour or my humanity! Let me quit,' said I, 'a country where there are none but such as treat all others like slaves; and more detestable still in suffering such treatment. I have seen enough of this nation to desire to see more of others. Let me leave a people suspicious to excess; whose morals are corrupted, and equally debased by superstition and vice; where the sciences are left uncultivated; where the great are slaves to the prince, and tyrants to the people; where the women are chaste only when debarred of the power of transgression; where the true disciples of Confucius are not less persecuted than those of Christianity: in a word, a country where men are forbidden to think, and consequently labour under the most miserable slavery, that of mental servitude.' Adieu.

LETTER CXIX.

TO THE SAME.

THE misfortunes of the great, my friend, are held up to engage our attention; are enlarged upon in tones of declamation; and the world is called upon to gaze at the noble sufferers: they have at once the comfort of admiration and pity.

Yet, where is the magnanimity of bearing misfortunes when the whole world is looking on? Men in such circumstances can act bravely even from motives of vanity. He only who, in the vale of obscurity, can brave adversity; who, without friends to encourage, acquaintances to pity, or even without hope to alleviate his distresses, can behave with tranquillity and indifference, is truly great: whether peasant or courtier, he deserves admiration, and should be held up for our imitation and respect.

The miseries of the poor are however entirely disregarded; though some undergo more real hardships in one day, than the great in their whole lives. It is indeed inconceivable what difficulties the meanest English sailor or soldier endures without murmuring or regret. Every day is to him a day of misery, and yet he bears his hard fate without repining.

With what indignation do I hear the heroes of tragedy complain of misfortunes and hardships, whose greatest calamity is founded in arrogance and pride! Their severest distresses are pleasures, compared to what many of the adventuring poor every day sustain without murmuring. These may eat, drink, and sleep, have slaves to attend them, and are sure of subsistence for life; while many of their fellow-creatures are obliged to wander, without a friend to comfort or to assist them, find enmity in every law, and are too poor to obtain even justice.

I have been led into these reflections from accidentally meeting, some days ago, a poor fellow begging at one of the outlets of this town, with a wooden leg. I was curious to learn what had reduced him to his present situation; and after giving him what I thought proper, desired to know the history of his life and misfortunes, and the manner in which he was reduced to his present distress. The disabled soldier, for such he was, with an intrepidity truly British, leaning on his crutch, put himself into an attitude

titude to comply with my request, and gave me his history as follows.

'As for misfortunes, Sir, I cannot 'pretend to have gone through more 'than others. Except the loss of my 'limb, and my being obliged to beg, 'I don't know any reason, thank Hea- 'ven, that I have to complain: there 'are some who have lost both legs and 'an eye; but, thank Heaven, it is not 'quite so bad with me.

'My father was a labourer in the 'country, and died when I was five 'years old; so I was put upon the pa- 'rish. As he had been a wandering 'sort of a man, the parishioners were 'not able to tell to what parish I be- 'longed, or where I was born; so they 'sent me to another parish, and that 'parish sent me to a third; till at last 'it was thought I belonged to no parish 'at all. At length, however, they 'fixed me. I had some disposition to 'be a scholar, and had actually learned 'my letters; but the master of the 'workhouse put me to business as soon 'as I was able to handle a mallet.

'Here I lived an easy kind of a life 'for five years. I only wrought ten 'hours in the day, and had my meat 'and drink provided for my labour. It 'is true, I was not suffered to stir far 'from the house, for fear I should run 'away: but what of that? I had the 'liberty of the whole house, and the 'yard before the door, and that was 'enough for me.

'I was next bound out to a farmer, 'where I was up both early and late; 'but I ate and drank well, and liked 'my business well enough, till he died. 'Being then obliged to provide for my- 'self, I was resolved to go and seek my 'fortune. Thus I lived, and went 'from town to town, working when I 'could get employment, and starving 'when I could get none; and might 'have lived so still: but, happening 'one day to go through a field belong- 'ing to a magistrate, I spied a hare cross- 'ing the path just before me. I be- 'lieve the devil put it into my head to 'fling my stick at it: well, what will 'you have on it? I killed the hare; 'and was bringing it away in triumph, 'when the justice himself met me: he 'called me a villain; and collaring me, 'desired I would give an account of 'myself. I began immediately to give 'a full account of all that I knew of 'my breed, seed, and generation: but, 'though I gave a very long account, 'the justice said, I could give no ac- 'count of myself; so I was indicted, 'and found guilty of being poor; and 'sent to Newgate, in order to be trans- 'ported to the Plantations.

'People may say this and that of be- 'ing in jail; but, for my part, I found 'Newgate as agreeable a place as ever 'I was in, in all my life. I had my 'bellyfull to eat and drink, and did no 'work; but, alas! this kind of life 'was too good to last for ever: I was 'taken out of prison, after five months; 'put on board of a ship, and sent off with 'two hundred more. Our passage was 'but indifferent; for we were all con- 'fined in the hold, and died very fast, 'for want of sweet air and provisions: 'but, for my part, I did not want 'meat, because I had a fever all the 'way. Providence was kind; when 'provisions grew short, it took away 'my desire of eating. When we came 'ashore, we were sold to the planters. 'I was bound for seven years; and as 'I was no scholar, for I had forgot my 'letters, I was obliged to work among 'the negroes; and served out my time, 'as in duty bound to do.

'When my time was expired, I work- 'ed my passage home; and glad I was 'to see old England again, because I 'loved my country. O liberty! liber- 'ty! liberty! that is the property of 'every Englishman, and I will die in 'it's defence! I was afraid, however, 'that I should be indicted for a vaga- 'bond once more, so did not much care 'to go into the country, but kept about 'town, and did little jobs when I could 'get them. I was very happy in this 'manner for some time; till one even- 'ing, coming home from work, two 'men knocked me down, and then de- 'sired me to stand still. They belong- 'ed to a press-gang: I was carried be- 'fore the justice; and, as I could give 'no account of myself, (that was the 'thing that already hobbled me) I had 'my choice left, whether to go on 'board a man of war, or list for a sol- 'dier. I chose to be a soldier: and in 'this post of a gentleman I served two 'campaigns; was at the battles in 'Flanders; and received but one wound 'through the breast, which is trouble- 'some to this day.

'When the peace came on, I was

'discharged;

'discharged; and as I could not work, 'because my wound was sometimes 'painful, I listed for a landman in the 'East India Company's service. I here 'fought the French in six pitched bat-'tles; and verily believe, that if I could 'read or write, our captain would have 'given me promotion, and made me a 'corporal. But that was not my good 'fortune; I soon fell sick; and when I 'became good for nothing, got leave to 'return home again, with forty pounds 'in my pocket, which I saved in the 'service. This was at the beginning 'of the present war; so I hoped to be 'set on shore, and to have the pleasure 'of spending my money: but the go-'vernment wanted men, and I was 'pressed again before ever I could set 'foot on shore.

'The boatswain found me, as he said, 'an obstinate fellow: he swore that I 'understood my business perfectly well, 'but that I pretended sickness merely 'to be idle. God knows, I knew no-'thing of sea-business: he beat me 'without considering what he was about. 'But still my forty pounds was some 'comfort to me under every beating; 'the money was my comfort; and the 'money I might have had to this day; 'but that our ship was taken by the 'French, and so I lost it all!

'Our crew was carried into a French 'prison, and many of them died, be-'cause they were not used to live in a 'jail; but, for my part, it was nothing 'to me, for I was seasoned. One night, 'however, as I was sleeping on the bed 'of boards, with a warm blanket about 'me, (for I always loved to lie well) 'I was awaked by the boatswain, who 'had a dark lanthorn in his hand. "Jack," says he to me, "will you "knock out the French centry's "brains?"—"I don't care," says I, 'striving to keep myself awake, "if I "lend a hand."—"Then follow me," 'says he, "and I hope we shall do bu-"siness." So up I got, and tied my 'blanket, which was all the cloaths I 'had, about my middle, and went with 'him to fight the Frenchmen. We 'had no arms; but one Englishman is 'able to beat five French at any time; 'so we went down to the door, where 'both the centries were posted, and 'rushing upon them, seized their arms 'in a moment, and knocked them 'down. From thence, nine of us ran 'together to the key, and seizing the 'first boat we met, got out of the har-'bour, and put to sea: we had not been 'here three days before we were taken 'up by an English privateer, who was 'glad of so many good hands; and we 'consented to run our chance. How-'ever, we had not so much luck as we 'expected. In three days we fell in 'with a French man of war, of forty 'guns, while we had but twenty-three; 'so to it we went. The fight lasted for 'three hours, and I verily believe we 'should have taken the Frenchman, but 'unfortunately, we lost almost all our 'men, just as we were going to get the 'victory. I was once more in the power 'of the French, and I believe it would 'have gone hard with me, had I been 'brought back to my old jail in Brest: 'but, by good fortune, we were re-taken, 'and carried to England once more.

'I had almost forgot to tell you, that 'in this last engagement I was wound-'ed in two places; I lost four fingers 'of the left-hand, and my leg was shot 'off. Had I the good fortune to have 'lost my leg and use of my hand on 'board a king's ship, and not a priva-'teer, I should have been entitled to 'cloathing and maintenance during the 'rest of my life; but that was not my 'chance: one man is born with a silver 'spoon in his mouth, and another with 'a wooden ladle. However, blessed be 'God, I enjoy good health, and have 'no enemy in this world that I know 'of, but the French, and the Justice of 'Peace.'

Thus saying, he limped off, leaving my friend and me in admiration of his intrepidity and content; nor could we avoid acknowledging, that an habitual acquaintance with misery is the truest school of fortitude and philosophy. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER CXX.

FROM THE SAME.

THE titles of European princes are rather more numerous than those of Asia, but by no means so sublime. The king of Visapour or Pegu, not satisfied with claiming the globe, and all it's appurtenances, to him and his heirs, asserts a property even in the firmament, and extends his orders to the milky way. The monarchs of Europe, with more modesty, confine their titles to earth, but make up by number what is wanting in their sublimity. Such is their passion for a long list of these splendid trifles, that I have known a German prince with more titles than subjects, and a Spanish nobleman with more names than shirts.

Contrary to this—'The English monarchs,' says a writer of the last century, 'disdain to accept of such titles, 'which tend only to encrease their 'pride, without improving their glory; 'they are above depending on the feeble helps of heraldry for respect, perfectly satisfied with the consciousness 'of acknowledged power.' At present, however, these maxims are laid aside; the English monarchs have of late assumed new titles, and have impressed their coins with the names and arms of obscure dukedoms, petty states, and subordinate employments. Their design in this, I make no doubt, was laudably to add new lustre to the British throne, but in reality paltry claims only serve to diminish that respect they are designed to secure.

There is in the honours assumed by kings, as in the decorations of architecture, a majestic simplicity, which best conduces to inspire our reverence and respect; numerous and trifling ornaments in either are strong indications of meanness in the designer, or of concealed deformity: should, for instance, the Emperor of China, among other titles, assume that of Deputy Mandarin of Maccau; or the Monarch of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, desire to be acknowledged as Duke of Brentford, Lunenburg, or Lincoln, the observer revolts at this mixture of important and paltry claims, and forgets the Emperor in his familiarity with the Duke or the Deputy.

I remember a similar instance of this inverted ambition in the illustrious King of Manacabo, upon his first treaty with the Portuguese. Among the presents that were made him by the ambassador of that nation, was a sword, with a brass hilt, which he seemed to set a peculiar value upon. This he thought too great an acquisition to his glory to be forgotten among the number of his titles. He therefore gave orders, that his subjects should style him for the future, 'Talipot, the immortal Potentate of 'Manacabo, Messenger of Morning, 'Enlightener of the Sun, Possessor of 'the whole Earth, and mighty Monarch 'of the brass-handled Sword.'

This method of mixing majestic and paltry titles, of quartering the arms of a great empire, and an obscure province, upon the some medal here, had it's rise in the virtuous partiality of their late monarchs. Willing to testify an affection to their native country, they gave it's name and ensigns a place upon their coins, and thus in some measure ennobled it's obscurity. It was indeed but just, that a people which had given England up their king, should receive some honorary equivalent in return: but at present these motives are no more; England has now a monarch wholly British, and it has some reason to hope for British titles upon British coins.

However, were the money of England designed to circulate in Germany, there would be no flagrant impropriety in impressing it with German names and arms; but though this might have been so upon former occasions, I am told there is no danger of it for the future: as England, therefore, designs to keep back it's gold, I candidly think Lunenburg, Oldenburg, and the rest of them, may very well keep back their titles.

It is a mistaken prejudice in princes to think that a number of loud sounding names can give new claims to respect. The truly great have ever disdained them.

them. When Timur the Lame had conquered Aſia, an orator by profeſſion came to compliment him upon the occaſion. He began his harangue, by ſtyling him the moſt omnipotent, and the moſt glorious object of the creation. The emperor ſeemed diſpleaſed with his paltry adulation; yet ſtill he went on, complimenting him, as the moſt mighty, the moſt valiant, and the moſt perfect of beings. 'Hold there, my friend,' cries the lame emperor; 'hold there, till I 'have got another leg.' In fact, the feeble, or the deſpotic alone, find pleaſure in multiplying theſe pageants of vanity; but ſtrength and freedom have nobler aims, and often find the fineſt adulation in majeſtic ſimplicity.

The young monarch of this country has already teſtified a proper contempt for ſeveral unmeaning appendages on royalty; cooks and ſcullions have been obliged to quit their fires; gentlemens gentlemen, and the whole tribe of *neceſſary people*, who did nothing, have been diſmiſſed from further ſervices. A youth, who can thus bring back ſimplicity and frugality to a court, will ſoon probably have a true reſpect for his own glory, and while he has diſmiſſed all uſeleſs employments, may diſdain to accept of empty or degrading titles. Adieu.

LETTER CXXI.

FROM THE SAME.

WHENEVER I attempt to characterize the Engliſh in general, ſome unforeſeen difficulties conſtantly occur to diſconcert my deſign; I heſitate between cenſure and praiſe: when I conſider them as reaſoning, philoſophical people, they have my applauſe; but when I reverſe the medal, and obſerve their inconſtancy and irreſolution, I can ſcarcely perſuade myſelf that I am obſerving the ſame people.

Yet, upon examination, this very inconſtancy, ſo remarkable here, flows from no other ſource than their love of reaſoning. The man who examines a complicated ſubject on every ſide, and calls in reaſon to his aſſiſtance, will frequently change; will find himſelf diſtracted by oppoſing probabilities, and contending proofs: every alteration of place will diverſify the proſpect; will give ſome latent argument new force, and contribute to maintain an anarchy in the mind.

On the contrary, they who never examine with their own reaſon act with more ſimplicity. Ignorance is poſitive, inſtinct perſeveres, and the human being moves in ſafety within the narrow circle of brutal uniformity. What is true with regard to individuals, is not leſs ſo when applied to ſtates. A reaſoning government like this is in continual fluctuation, while thoſe kingdoms where men are taught not to controvert, but obey, continue always the ſame. In Aſia, for inſtance, where the monarch's authority is ſupported by force, and acknowledged through fear, a change of government is entirely unknown. All the inhabitants ſeem to wear the ſame mental complexion, and remain contented with hereditary oppreſſion. The ſovereign's pleaſure is the ultimate rule of duty; every branch of the adminiſtration is a perfect epitome of the whole; and if one tyrant is depoſed, another ſtarts up in his room to govern as his predeceſſor. The Engliſh, on the contrary, inſtead of being led by power, endeavour to guide themſelves by reaſon; inſtead of appealing to the pleaſure of the prince, appeal to the original rights of mankind. What one rank of men aſſert is denied by others, as the reaſons on oppoſite ſides happen to come home with greater or leſs conviction. The people of Aſia are directed by precedent, which never alters; the Engliſh by reaſon, which is ever changing it's appearance.

The diſadvantages of an Aſiatic government acting in this manner by precedent are evident; original errors are thus continued, without hopes of redreſs; and all marks of genius are levelled down to one ſtandard, ſince no ſuperiority of thinking can be allowed it's exertion in mending obvious defects. But to recompenſe thoſe defects, their governments undergo no new alterations, they have no new evils to fear, nor no fermentations in the conſtitution that continue; the ſtruggle for power is ſoon

ſoon over, and all becomes tranquil as before; they are habituated to ſubordination, and men are taught to form no other deſires than thoſe which they are allowed to ſatisfy.

The diſadvantages of a government acting from the immediate influence of reaſon, like that of England, are not leſs than thoſe of the former. It is extremely difficult to induce a number of free beings to co-operate for their mutual benefit; every poſſible advantage will neceſſarily be ſought, and every attempt to procure it muſt be attended with a new fermentation; various reaſons will lead different ways, and equity and advantage will often be out-balanced by a combination of clamour and prejudice. But though ſuch a people may be thus in the wrong, they have been influenced by an happy deluſion; their errors are ſeldom ſeen till they are felt; each man is himſelf the tyrant he has obeyed, and ſuch a maſter he can eaſily forgive. The diſadvantages he feels may, in reality, be equal to what is felt in the moſt deſpotic government; but man will bear every calamity with patience, when he knows himſelf to be the author of his own misfortunes. Adieu.

LETTER CXXII.

FROM THE SAME.

MY long reſidence here begins to fatigue me; as every object ceaſes to be new, it no longer continues to be pleaſing: ſome minds are ſo fond of variety, that pleaſure itſelf, if permanent, would be inſupportable; and we are thus obliged to ſolicit new happineſs even by courting diſtreſs. I only therefore wait the arrival of my ſon, to vary this trifling ſcene, and borrow new pleaſure from danger and fatigue. A life, I own, thus ſpent in wandering from place to place, is at beſt but empty diſſipation. But to purſue trifles is the lot of humanity; and whether we buſtle in a pantomime, or ſtrut at a coronation; whether we ſhout at a bonfire, or harangue in a ſenate-houſe; whatever object we follow, it will at laſt ſurely conduct us to futility and diſappointment. The wiſe buſtle and laugh as they walk in the pageant, but fools buſtle and are important; and this probably is all the difference between them.

This may be an apology for the levity of my former correſpondence; I talked of trifles, and I knew that they were trifles: to make the things of this life ridiculous, it was only ſufficient to call them by their names.

In other reſpects, I have omitted ſeveral ſtriking circumſtances in the deſcription of this country, as ſuppoſing them either already known to you, or as not being thoroughly known to myſelf. But there is one omiſſion for which I expect no forgiveneſs; namely, my being totally ſilent upon their buildings, roads, rivers, and mountains. This is a branch of ſcience on which all other travellers are ſo very prolix, that my deficiency will appear the more glaring. With what pleaſure, for inſtance, do ſome read of a traveller in Egypt meaſuring a fallen column with his cane, and finding it exactly five feet nine inches long; of his creeping through the mouth of a catacomb, and coming out by a different hole from that he entered; of his ſtealing the finger of an antique ſtatue, in ſpite of the janizary that watched him; or his adding a new conjecture to the hundred and fourteen conjectures already publiſhed, upon the names of *Oſiris* and *Iſis!*

Methinks I hear ſome of my friends in China demanding a ſimilar account of London, and the adjacent villages; and if I remain here much longer, it is probable I may gratify their curioſity. I intend, when run dry on other topics, to take a ſerious ſurvey of the city-wall; to deſcribe that beautiful building the Manſion-houſe; I will enumerate the magnificent ſquares in which the nobility chiefly reſide, and the royal palaces appointed for the reception of the Engliſh monarch; nor will I forget the beauties of Shoe Lane, in which I myſelf have reſided ſince my arrival. You ſhall find me no way inferior to many of my brother-travellers in the arts of deſcription. At preſent, however, as a ſpecimen of this way of writing, I

send you a few hasty remarks, collected in a late journey I made to Kentish Town, *and this in the manner of modern voyagers.*

'Having heard much of Kentish Town, I conceived a strong desire to see that celebrated place. I could have wished, indeed, to satisfy my curiosity without going thither; but that was impracticable; and therefore I resolved to go. Travellers have two methods of going to Kentish Town: they take coach, which costs nine-pence; or they may go a-foot, which costs nothing. In my opinion, a coach is by far the most eligible convenience; but I was resolved to go on foot, having considered with myself, that going in that manner would be the cheapest way.

'As you set out from Dog-house Bar, you enter upon a fine level road, railed in on both sides, commanding on the right a fine prospect of groves, and fields enamelled with flowers, which would wonderfully charm the sense of smelling, were it not for a dunghill on the left, which mixes it's effluvia with their odours. This dunghill is of much greater antiquity than the road; and I must not omit a piece of injustice I was going to commit upon this occasion. My indignation was levelled against the makers of the dunghill for having brought it so near the road; whereas it should have fallen upon the makers of the road for having brought that so near the dunghill.

'After proceeding in this manner for some time, a building, resembling somewhat a triumphal arch, salutes the traveller's view. This structure, however, is peculiar to this country, and vulgarly called a Turnpike-gate. I could perceive a long inscription in large characters on the front, probably upon the occasion of some triumph; but being in haste, I left it to be made out by some subsequent adventurer who might happen to travel this way; so continuing my course to the West, I soon arrived at an unwalled town called Islington.

'Islington is a pretty neat town, mostly built of brick, with a church and bells: it has a small lake, or rather pond, in the midst; though at present very much neglected. I am told it is dry in summer; if this be the case, it can be no very proper receptacale for fish, of which the inhabitants themselves seem sensible, by bringing all that are eaten there from London.

'After having surveyed the curiosities of this fair and beautiful town, I proceeded forward, leaving a fair stone building, called the White Conduit House, on my right: here the inhabitants of London often assemble, to celebrate a feast of hot rolls and butter. Seeing such numbers, each with their little tables before them, employed on this occasion, must, no doubt, be a very amusing sight to the looker on, but still more so to those who perform in the solemnity.

'From hence I parted with reluctance to *Pancrass*, as it is written, or *Pancridge*, as it is pronounced; but which should be both pronounced and written *Pangrace*. This emendation I will venture *meo arbitrio*: Παν in the Greek language signifies *all*, which added to the English word *grace*, maketh *all grace*, or *Pangrace*; and, indeed, this is a very proper appellation to a place of so much sanctity as Pangrace is universally esteemed. However this be, if you except the parish church and it's fine bells, there is little in Pangrace worth the attention of the curious observer.

'From Pangrace to Kentish Town is an easy journey of one mile and a quarter: the road lies through a fine champain country, well watered with beautiful drains, and enamelled with flowers of all kinds; which might contribute to charm every sense, were it not that the odoriferous gales are often more impregnated with dust than perfume.

'As you enter Kentish Town, the eye is at once presented with the shops of artificers, such as venders of candles, small-coal, and hair-brooms; there are also several august buildings of red brick, with numberless sign-posts, or rather pillars, in a peculiar order of architecture: I send you a drawing of several, vide A. B. C. This pretty town probably borrows it's name from it's vicinity to the county of Kent; and indeed, it is not unnatural that it should, as there are only London and the adjacent villages that lie between them. Be this as it will, perceiving night approach, I made a hasty repast on roasted mutton and a certain dried fruit called potatoes, resolving to protract

my remarks upon my return; and this I would very willingly have done; but was prevented by a circumstance which, in truth, I had for some time foreseen; for night coming on, it was impossible to take a proper survey of the country, as I was obliged to return home in the dark.' Adieu.

LETTER CXXIII.

TO THE SAME.

AFTER a variety of disappointments, my wishes are at length fully satisfied. My son, so long expected, is arrived, at once by his presence banishing my anxiety, and opening a new scene of unexpected pleasure. His improvements in mind and person have far surpassed even the sanguine expectations of a father. I left him a boy, but he is returned a man; pleasing in his person, hardened by travel, and polished by adversity. His disappointment in love, however, had infused an air of melancholy into his conversation, which seemed at intervals to interrupt our mutual satisfaction. I expected that this could find a cure only from time; but Fortune, as if willing to load us with her favours, has in a moment repaid every uneasiness with rapture.

Two days after his arrival, the man in black, with his beautiful niece, came to congratulate us upon this pleasing occasion; but, guess our surprize, when my friend's lovely kinswoman was found to be the very captive my son had rescued from Persia, and who had been wrecked on the Wolga, and was carried by the Russian peasants to the port of Archangel. Were I to hold the pen of a novelist, I might be prolix in describing their feelings at so unexpected an interview; but you may conceive their joy without my assistance; words were unable to express their transports, then how can words describe it?

When two young persons are sincerely enamoured of each other, nothing can give me such pleasure as seeing them married; whether I know the parties or not, I am happy at thus binding one link more in the universal chain. Nature has, in some measure, formed me for a match-maker, and given me a soul to sympathize with every mode of human felicity. I instantly, therefore, consulted the man in black, whether we might not crown their mutual wishes by marriage; his soul seems formed of similar materials with mine; he instantly gave his consent, and the next day was appointed for the solemnization of their nuptials.

All the acquaintances which I had made since my arrival, were present at this gay solemnity. The little beau was constituted master of the ceremonies; and his wife, Mrs. Tibbs, conducted the entertainment with proper decorum. The man in black, and the pawn-broker's widow, were very sprightly and tender upon this occasion. The widow was dressed up under the direction of Mrs. Tibbs; and as for her lover, his face was set off by the assistance of a pig-tail wig, which was lent by the little beau, to fit him for making love with proper formality. The whole company easily perceived that it would be a double wedding before all was over; and, indeed, my friend and the widow seemed to make no secret of their passion: he even called me aside, in order to know my candid opinion, whether I did not think him a little too old to be married. 'As for my own part,' continued he, 'I know I am going to play the 'fool; but all my friends will praise my 'wisdom, and produce me as the very 'pattern of discretion to others.'

At dinner, every thing seemed to run on with good-humour, harmony, and satisfaction. Every creature in company thought themselves pretty, and every jest was laughed at: the man in black sat next his mistress, helped her plate, chimed her glass, and jogging her knees and her elbow, he whispered something arch in her ear, on which she patted his cheek; never was antiquated passion so playful, so harmless, and amusing, as between this reverend couple.

The second course was now called for; and, among a variety of other dishes, a fine turkey was placed before the widow. The Europeans, you know, carve as they eat; my friend, therefore, begged his mistress to help him to a part of the

the turkey. The widow, pleaſed with an opportunity of ſhowing her ſkill in carving, (an art upon which it ſeems ſhe piqued herſelf) began to cut it up by firſt taking off the leg. 'Madam,' cries my friend, 'if I might be permitted to adviſe, I would begin by cutting off the wing, and then the leg will come off more eaſily.'—'Sir,' replies the widow, 'give me leave to underſtand cutting up a fowl, I always begin with the leg.'—'Yes, Madam,' replies the lover; 'but if the wing be the moſt convenient manner, I would begin with the wing.'—'Sir,' interrupts the lady, 'when you have fowls of your own, begin with the wing if you pleaſe; but give me leave to take off the leg; I hope I am not to be taught at this time of day.'—'Madam,' interrupts he, 'we are never too old to be inſtructed.'—'Old, Sir!' interrupts the other, 'who is old, Sir? When I die of age, I know of ſome that will quake for fear: if the leg does not come off, take the turkey to yourſelf.'—'Madam,' replied the man in black, 'I do not care a farthing whether the leg or the wing comes off; if you are for the leg firſt, why, you ſhall have the argument, even though it be as I ſay.'—'As for the matter of that,' cries the widow, 'I do not care a fig, whether you are for the leg off or on; and, friend, for the future keep your diſtance.'—'O,' replied the other, 'that is eaſily done, it is only removing to the other end of the table; and ſo, Madam, your moſt obedient humble ſervant.'

Thus was this courtſhip of an age deſtroyed in one moment; for this dialogue effectually broke off the match between this reſpectable couple that had been but juſt concluded. The ſmalleſt accidents diſappoint the moſt important treaties: however, though it in ſome meaſure interrupted the general ſatisfaction, it no ways leſſened the happineſs of the youthful couple; and by the young lady's looks I could perceive ſhe was not entirely diſpleaſed with this interruption.

In a few hours the whole tranſaction ſeemed entirely forgotten; and we have all ſince enjoyed thoſe ſatisfactions which reſult from a conſciouſneſs of making each other happy. My ſon and his fair partner are fixed here for life; the man in black has given them up a ſmall eſtate in the country, which, added to what I was able to beſtow, will be capable of ſupplying all the real, but not the fictitious, demands of happineſs. As for myſelf, the world being but one city to me, I do not much care in which of the ſtreets I happen to reſide: I ſhall therefore ſpend the remainder of my life in examining the manners of different countries, and have prevailed upon the man in black to be my companion. 'They muſt often change,' ſays Confucius, 'who would be conſtant in happineſs or wiſdom.' Adieu.

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